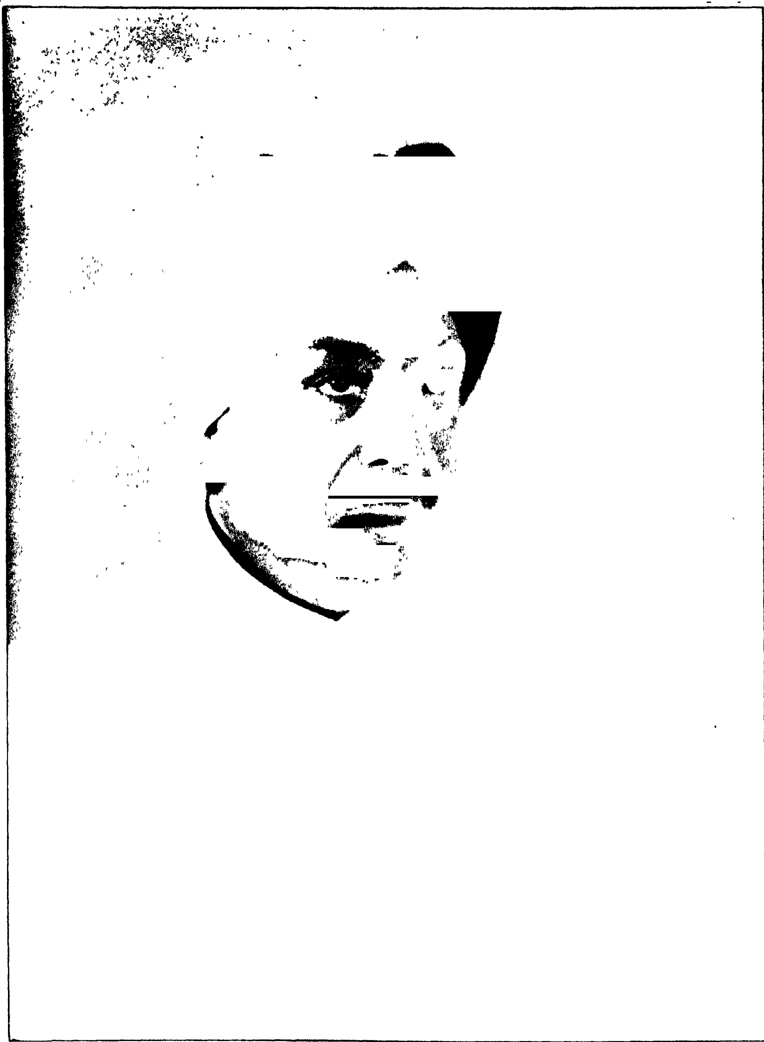




SPEECHES AND WRITINGS

HAR BILAS SARDA



HAR BILAS SARDA, 1933 A. D.

SPEECHES AND WRITINGS
HAR BILAS SARDA

M.R.A.S., F.R.S.L., F.S.S.,

AUTHOR OF

HINDU SUPERIORITY; MAHARANA KUMBHA;
AJMER: HISTORICAL & DESCRIPTIVE;
HAMMIR OF RANTHAMBHOR.
MAHARANA SANGA, &C.

......................And tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

TENNYSON, *Ulysses.*

AJMER
VEDIC YANTRALAYA
1935.

Printed & Published by Chand Mal Chandak,
Manager, at the Vedic Yantralya, Ajmer.

Dedicated

to

The Honourable

Lieutenant Colonel Sir George D. Ogilvie,

K.C.I.E., C.S.I., C.I.E., I.A.,

Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana

and

Chief Commissioner, Ajmer-Merwara.

FOREWORD

BY

SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYER, K.C.I.E.

I have glanced through the volume containing speeches and writings by Dewan Bahadur Har Bilas Sarda on social, legal and historical matters. Mr. Sarda is well known as the author and prime mover of one of the best-known pieces of social legislation attempted in the Indian Legislature, and his work as a social reformer has been very much in the public eye. But, apart from his activities as a legislator and a social reformer, Mr. Sarda is a historical scholar of distinction and he has also taken a live interest in educational problems. It is a happy idea to have collected his works, and I feel sure that his writings would not only display his many-sided activities but arouse interest and afford instruction to those who value the things of the mind.

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PRINCIPAL P. SESHADRI.

INTRODUCTION

BY PRINCIPAL P. SESHADRI.

Diwan Bahadur Har Bilas Sarda is among the most distinguished Indian leaders of his generation to-day, having made his mark in more than one sphere of national activity. As a social reformer, he has left an indelible impression on the history of this country by his Child-Marriage Restraint Act and will be remembered with such illustrious champions of the cause as Raja Ram Mohun Roy, Pandit Ishwar Chand Vidyasagar and the late Mr. Mahadeo Govind Ranade. A scholar steeped in the best traditions of Rajputana, he has laboured for decades on the study and narration of its fascinating, if somewhat chequered, history. As a representative of Ajmer-Merwara in the Legislative Assembly, for as many as three successive terms it has been his privilege not only to stand for the needs of his own constituents, but also to work for the wider interests of his native land. As a keen student, even at this age, of many lines of intellectual enquiry, his is an active mind ranging over varied fields of thought claiming kinship with those whose writings are not of mere ephemeral interest. It is therefore fitting that we should have this collection of his *Speeches and Writings* containing a record of his varied activities and reviewing his work of decades.

Of some of his utterances, it may be said without any exaggeration, that they have made a difference to the discussions of legislative assemblies on matters of vital importance to the millions of mankind in India who constitute a fifth of the total population of the world. His volumes like *Hindu Superiority* have arrested attention, giving new inspiration and hope to his people and summing up the great achievements

of a large section of the human race, his paper on *Hindus—their Strength and Weakness* in this volume itself being typical of this class of writings. To those—comparatively small perhaps in number—who feel interested in the inner workings of the human mind even more than in its external manifestations, it must always be a delight to enter into the spirit of these pages and come into contact with an intellect ever keenly intent on the pursuit of knowledge. It is significant that he should have chosen for the motto of this work, Tennyson's famous lines in *Ulysess*:

> We are not now that strength which in old days
> Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
> One equal temper of heroic hearts,
> Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
> To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

To one like myself living in the city of his birth and enjoying the privilege of his friendship there is a personal aspect which is even of more absorbing interest. Diwan Bahadur Har Bilas Sarda is an institution by himself in Ajmer and is its first citizen. For decades he has been intimately connected with her fortunes and her hopes and aspirations have found persistent expression through his lips. It is impossible to think of Ajmer without Mr. Sarda and even in distant hamlets in South India, I have sometimes found it easy for villagers to locate me as coming from the city of Sarda though they were conservative and disliked his social legislation.

One of my happy experiences during the few years I have been in Ajmer, as head of the very institution which counts Diwan Bahadur Har Bilas Sarda as one of its most distinguished *alumni* and also as an old member of its college staff is his intellectual friendship. There are few sounds more welcome to me in Ajmer than of the periodical arrival of his car at my house and few visions more pleasant than of the entrance of

his somewhat burly form into my drawing-room—may his shadow never grow less!—with a cheerful smile on his face and always a serious enquiry in his mind about something concerning books which I am generally able to meet from my extensive private collection. Over many a cup of coffee have we discussed myriads of things, the poetry of Tennyson, some Romantic tradition of Rajputana, the future of Indian Politics, the education of the young in India or the strange and baffling ways of mankind in our immediate neighbourhood or in the wider world. In more ways than one, he has often reminded me of Dr. Johnson expressing opinions on men and things, sitting curiously enough in the exact posture of the great man of letters, leaning to one side, and seeking effectiveness of utterance by emphatic shakes of the head. It is however only fair to add that the Diwan Bahadur has nothing of the roughness of the great literary dictator and is a model of suavity in conversation. There can be no greater tribute to his intellectual thirst than the continual demand that he makes upon me and my library for all kinds of odds and ends of scholarship, particularly in my own branch of studies, English Literature, with all the zeal of a professional student of letters.

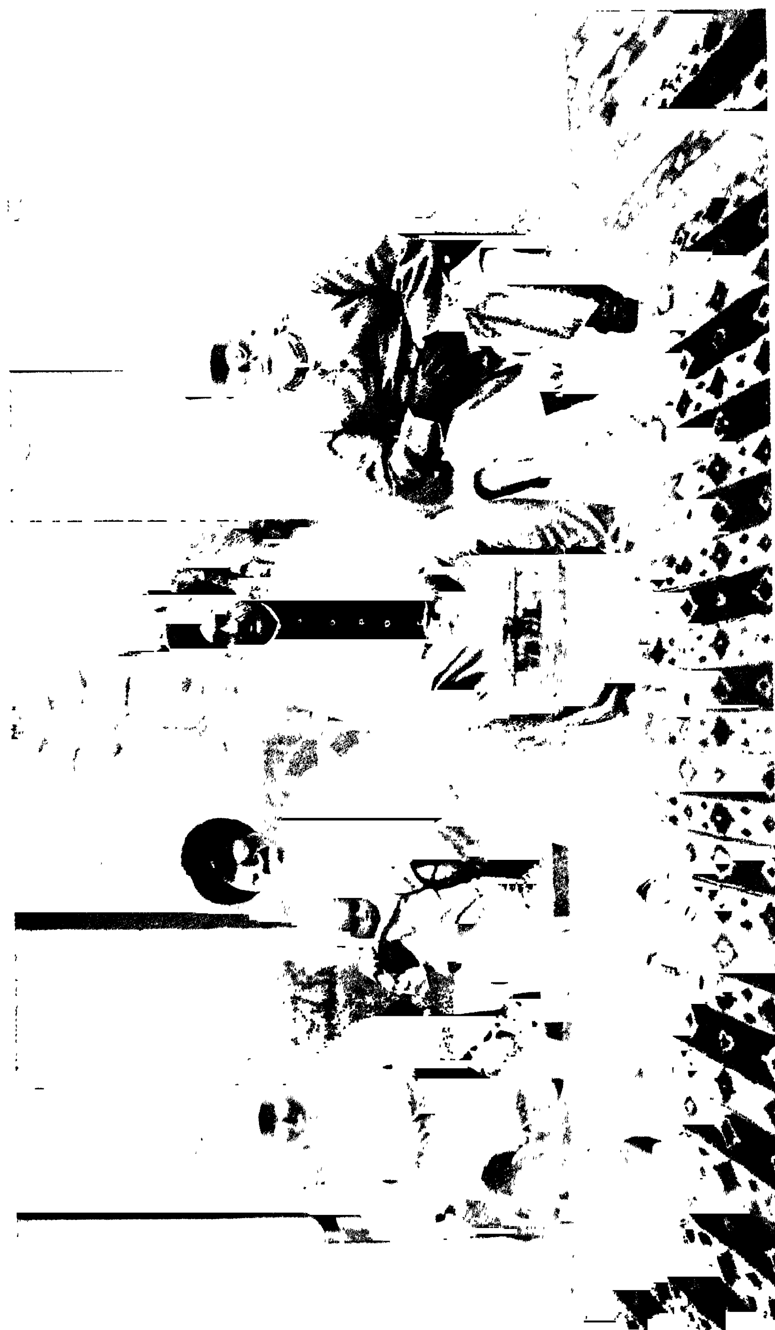
It may be remembered at the outset, that this book of *Speeches and Writings* represents only a small part of his intellectual output, consisting of miscellaneous things which could not be included in any of his independent volumes. He came into prominence years ago in the literary world of India by his striking production summing up the greatness of Hindu civilization, with the somewhat challenging title, *Hindu Superiority*. No student of Rajput history, which is awaiting revision and extension from the point at which Colonel James Tod left years ago, can afford to ignore his contributions, in the excellent manuals he has written on some of its most heroic

personalities, *Maharana Kumbha*, *Maharana Sānga* and *Maharajah Hammir*. All available history and tradition regarding Ajmer has also been gathered into his volume on the subject which is the only authoritative study of the city. It is not intended to be uncomplimentary to his writings to suggest that this volume gathers together some of the loose ends of his writings and must be read only as a supplement to his more complete and independent volumes which no student of Indian life and civilization can afford to neglect.

When the time comes for chronicling the developments of this century in India, there is sure to be a glowing page dedicated to Diwan Bahadur Har Bilas Sarda's work as a social reformer. It is therefore eminently fitting that the first section of this volume should deal with problems of social reform in India. It will be noticed that most of them relate to the position of women in Hindu society, a subject which always warms up his heart. He is a profound believer in Tennyson's famous lines:

> The woman's cause is man's: they rise or sink
> Together, dwarf'd or godlike, bond or free.

I have often watched with interest his righteous indignation when anything is said against the woman's cause in India or elsewhere in the world. It is even difficult to suppress the feeling that he has an exaggerated deference to the other sex, reminding one of some of the exponents of mediæval chivalry like the troubadors and trouveres of France. One of my harmless amusements, if I may make the confession here, is to bait him on the subject and rouse his excitement allowing it to cool down after a few minutes of warm defence! I can claim to have met many leaders of Indian thought and action in my time, but I have no difficulty in stating that Diwan Bahadur Har Bilas Sarda



is the warmest friend of the woman's cause we have in this country to-day. If Meredith's Fair Ladies in Revolt saw him, they would carry him away in triumph as one of their best friends shouting:

"We have won a champion, sisters, and a sage!"

"It is good to sing praise" said the Bible, but it is not always realised that the qualities of gratitude and reverence embodied in the advice do more good to us than to those to whom we offer our tributes. One of the pleasing sections of this volume is entitled, *Tributes and Appreciations*, containing a sketch of Swami Dayanand, Asoka, Col. Ingersoll, Imam Hussain and Rabindranath Tagore. Praise can easily degenerate into vague and ecstatic emotion, but his appreciation is always based on sound reason and he is never swept off his feet by a whirlwind of admiration. His sketch of Swami Dayanand is an instance in point. It is difficult to say if Mr. Sarda is technically an Arya Samajist, but his enthusiasm for the cult does not degenerate into blind worship and he can always see its limitations. He has hardly any sympathy, for the aggressive and obnoxious pugilism of the puritanic dissenter which one often notices about members of that organization. Though liberal in his theology, Mr. Sarda has deep and abiding religious faith and there can be no better indication of his catholicity of temperament than the fact that the same section includes a eulogy of Colonel Ingersoll with his iconoclastic denunciation of religious forms, as well as of the founder of the Arya Samaj in India with his insistence on going back to the revelation of the Vedas.

Diwan Bahadur Har Bilas Sarda has supplemented here his work as an historian of Rajputana by well-informed studies of *Prithviraja Vijaya*, an epic of India's most famous and romantic cavalier, Prithviraja; Sivaji whose fascination no historian of India can possibly escape; Emperor Visaldeva whose memory is

of special interest to the citizens of Ajmer and Rana Hammir, another of the illustrious galaxies of Rajput heroes to whom his mind has turned repeatedly for inspiration and strength.

It is not necessary to disguise the fact that it is primarily the instinct of the patriot which operates behind these sketches, but it will be conceded that it has not overpowered the duties of a historian and the Indian student can therefore confidently look here, not only for a glowing appreciation of all that is great in his country's history, but also for a careful and comprehensive statement of facts based on recent historical research. It is difficult to supress the feeling that Diwan Bahadur Har Bilas Sarda's work would have been even more monumental and lasting, if he had had facilities for concentrating all his available time and energy on historical investigation, without the distractions of office or politics and produced an extensive history of Rajputana which is the most absorbing subject of his study and affections.

It is not for me, as an officer of the Government of India, to offer any comment on his political speeches, mostly delivered in the Indian Legislative Assembly. Our outlooks on many political questions are bound to differ, but even an officer of the Government can perhaps pay a tribute to the persistence of his efforts in the cause of his people. The advancement of the status and privileges of Ajmer-Merwara is a matter very dear to his heart and it will be a long time before we shall see another champion of the needs of the people of this Administration, actuated by similar ability and zeal in their cause. His political utterances are characterised by study and useful information and are not like the vapourings of immature and half-educated minds with which we are only too familiar in Indian politics.

Of special interest to me are the papers written by Diwan Bahadur Har Bilas Sarda on educational subjects.

He has taken deep and abiding interest in the subject of education all his life and he rightly pleads here for increased facilities for education for Ajmer-Merwara. The low percentage of literacy fills him with sadness and he is throughly dissatisfied with the progress of women's education. He longs for the day when the educational work of his beloved Government College and other educational institutions in Ajmer-Merwara will culminate in the foundation of a university for Rajputana, "a consummation devoutly to be wished", by all lovers of education in this part of India.

Diwan Bahadur Sarda has done well in including some miscellaneous pieces at the end of his work, especially as they draw attention to different facets of his mind. Learning sits lightly on him; he can occasionally forget even the austerity and seriousness of the social reformer and he can also unburden himself of the cares of politics when he meets a congenial friend He can enjoy most of the good things of the world, a mango with delicious flavour, a cup of South Indian coffee, well-made sweets, a good game of cricket, a fine piece of music or a light joke. It is not surprising that he should have thought of writing a pleasant dissertation on beards and we shall perhaps see him some day writing a complimentary essay on the Art of Shaving! The Diwan Bahadur may be a social reformer, scholar, politician and historian, but he is above all *human* and is in no sense,

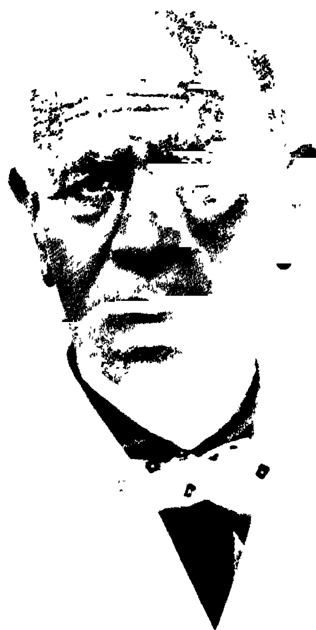
> Too great and good
> To be human nature's daily food.

Susceptible like any of us to the ordinary human weaknesses, he is eminently loveable and in my mind at least, these writings will always be associated with an interesting personality radiating its bonhomie, even through pages which may sometimes be loaded with learning, or excited with the spirit of controversy.

When Diwan Bahadur Har Bilas Sarda brought these *Speeches and Writings* together and wished me to suggest a title for the volume, I said, perhaps with a mischievous twinkle in my eye and my tongue in my cheek, that it may be called *The Evening of My Life*, after the famous memoirs of Clemenceau, the Tiger of France! Mr. Sarda is approaching the Biblical span of human life, for he will soon be seventy, but I can never forget the violent indignation with which he rejected the title. It was obvious he felt nowhere near the evening of his life and I withdrew the suggestion with haste, compromising with the somewhat prosaic heading *Speeches and Writings*. He is still young in spirits and it will be the prayer of his numerous friends and well-wishers all over India that he should never grow old and he should enjoy the blessing of the famous but often misunderstood Greek saying:

Those whom the Gods love die *young*.

Principal's Lodge,
Government College, Ajmer,
4th November 1935.



RAM GOPAL

HAR BILAS SARDA

A SKETCH BY

RAMGOPAL, BAR-AT-LAW,
AUTHOR OF DYNAMIC SOCIOLOGY, POETIC THOUGHTS, REFLECTION AND PROVERBS, SELECTION FROM INGERSOLL, SELECTIONS FROM ESSAYS, &C.

MR. HAR BILAS SARDA, Judge, Author, Teacher, Historian, Reformer and Legislator, was born on the 3rd June 1867, A. D., in Ajmer. His father, Sriyut Har Narayan Sarda (Maheshwari), was a scholar and Vedantist, with a philosophic mind and ever eager to study, discuss, argue and seek for truth. It was from his father that the son inherited his love of reading and study. Sriyut Har Narayan was Librarian of the Government College, Ajmer, and every year took stock of the Government College Library, the biggest library in Ajmer, during summer vacations. Young Sarda helped his father in this work and came to know most of the important books in the library. He had thus ample opportunities which he fully utilised for reading books on general literature, philosophy and history. His father had some idea of the studious, enquiring, intelligent and receptive character, and the descriptive and debating powers of his son and predicted a bright future for him, a prediction that has been amply fulfilled.

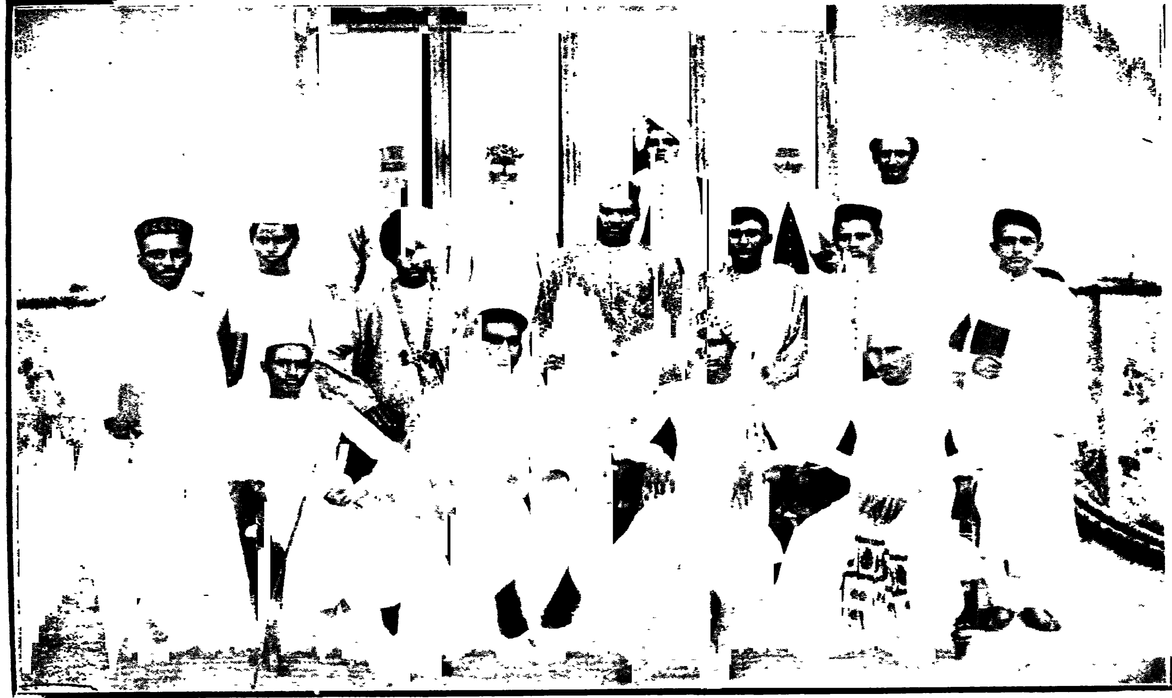
Mr. Har Bilas Sarda was the only son of his father. He had a sister who died soon after her first confinement in September 1892. Girl education was almost unknown in those days in Rajputana. Her father however, taught her Hindi at home. She acquired a good knowledge of Hindi, and during the long illness

of her father in 1891-92 she used to read out to him *Yoga Vashista*, from which he derived great consolation. Both brother and sister were deeply attached to each other and to their parents, to whom they always rendered their loving duties of service and obedience. I knew his parents personally as a boy and I still remember their various acts of kindness towards me. In fact, there was a sort of family friendship between my parents and his,—a friendship which has continued in an intensified form to the second and third generation. My father, Lala Fateh Lal (Kayasth), was also a Vedantist and both were fond of seeking and interviewing learned *Sādhus* and *Sannyāsis* who came to Ajmer. There was also another gentleman, Ganesh (tailor), of the same faith and turn of mind, and though not so well educated as the other two, was intelligent, eager and receptive. These three formed a happy trio who generally went about together, interviewing *Saints* and *Sādhus* and hearing their discourses.

HIS EDUCATION AND TRAVELS.

Mr. Sarda passed his matriculation in 1883 and his First Arts in 1885. Then he went to the Agra College where he took his B.A. degree in 1888 with English, Philosophy and Persian as his subjects. He passed with Honours in English and was first amongst the students of the Colleges of the United Provinces sitting for the examination of the Calcutta University. He wished to go to England to read for the B.A. of the Oxford University and also for the Bar. As a matter of fact, young Sarda and myself hatched the idea and formed the plan of going abroad together by the same boat sailing in the first week of October 1888. I left by that boat but my friend could not, owing to his father's old age and ill-health. In April 1892, his father died and was followed a few months later by his mother and sister.

AN AGRA COLLEGE BOARDING HOUSE GROUP 1888 A. D.



SITTING:—HAR BILAS SARDA SECOND FROM THE LEF

From his boyhood he was fond of reading newspapers and books, and studying political and social questions. He, in conjunction with myself and some other friends, opened a Debating Club in Ajmer where we used to discuss all sorts of social and semi-political questions. In 1888, he for the first time visited the Indian National Congress at Allahabad which was then in its third session, and was greatly impressed with the personality of Pandit Ajodhyanath and Mr. A.O. Hume who was then the General Secretary of the Congress. He again attended, as a visitor, some more meetings of that body at Nagpur, Bombay, Benares, Calcutta and Lahore.

His Travels: He has travelled widely in India and gained a lot of experience of the diversified conditions prevalent in different places. While quite a child, he went with his father to Jaipur in 1876 when the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, came there. Soon after, he went withhis parents on a pilgrimage to Badrinarayana in the Himalayas. He has also been to the other places of pilgrimage, Rameshwaram in the extreme South and Jagannath in the East. He has been to most of the Indian States in Rajputana. He was in Jodhpur and Alwar in 1884. He has been to Bikaner, Kishengarh, Dungarpur, Sirohi, Udaipur, Jaisalmer, Kotah, Bundi and Jhalarapatan and has been acquainted with most of the Ruling Chiefs and their ministers in Rajputana. In 1904, he went to the Punjab and saw Lahore, Amritsar and other places. Later, he paid visits to Delhi, Hardwar, Dehra Dun, Roorkie, Moradabad, Lucknow, Benares, Muttra and Aligarh. He went to Simla for the first time in 1899 when there was no Railway. Since 1924, he has visited Simla every year in connection with the Legislative Assembly till 1934. He went to Calcutta, Patna, Gaya, Cawnpore, Allahabad, Bareilly, in 1914, and again in 1927. He visited Gwalior, Indore, Baroda amongst the Mahratta

States. His first visit to Ahmedabad and Bombay was in1888, and since then he has visited Bombay almost every year. He went to Poona for the first time in 1913, and the second time in 1921 to attend the first Oriental Conference. He went there the third time to see Mahatma Gandhi in the Yerawada Jail in 1933. He has been to Hyderabad, Burhanpur, Bangalore, Madras, Madura, Srirangji, Kanchi, and Trichur which last place he visited in company with myself and other friends.

Among the hill stations he has visited Abu and Simla several times and paid a flying visit to Ootacamund. He visited the North-West Frontier Provinces as a member of the Primary Education Committee when he went to Peshawar, Abbotabad, Khyber, Kohat, Bannu, Taxilla and Dera Ismail Khan.

His Career : He started his career in 1889 when he was appointed a senior teacher in the Government College, Ajmer. In 1892, he was transferred to the Judicial Department of the British Province of Ajmer-Merwara. In 1894 he was placed on special duty to revise the Ajmer Regulation Book, a compendium of Laws and Regulations for Ajmer-Merwara. In the same year, on the completion of this work, his services were transferred to the Foreign Department and he was appointed Guardian to His Highness the Maharawal of Jaisalmer. He reverted to the judicial service of Ajmer-Merwara in 1902. He was Additional Extra Assistant Commissioner and Sub-judge First Class, Ajmer, for sometime and later was Judge, Small Cause Court, Ajmer. He officiated as Additional District and Sessions Judge, Ajmer-Merwara in 1923.

He was Municipal Commissioner of Ajmer for eight years from 1894 A.D. He was Honorary Secretary of the Ajmer-Merwara Publicity Board during the Great War. He retired from government service in December 1923, and was elected a member of the Legislative Assembly in January 1924, when for the first time Ajmer-Merwara

was allowed to return a member to the Assembly. He was appointed Senior Judge of the Chief Court, Jodhpur, in 1925, and while serving in Jodhpur was re-elected Member of the Legislative Assembly in December 1926.

He introduced, in January 1925 in the Legislative Assembly, the well-known Child Marriage Bill which was eventually passed in September 1929, and became law on the 1st of October of that year though it came into operation on the 1st April, 1930 A. D.

HIS CONNECTION WITH THE GREAT REFORM MOVEMENT, THE ARYA SAMAJ.

While still a child, he used to accompany his father during the latter's visits to the learned *Sannyasis* who visited Ajmer. When about eight years old, he went with his father to hear lectures delivered by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in Ajmer, and later on always attended his lectures whenever the Swami came to Ajmer. He was present with myself (then his class-fellow) at the time of Swami Dayanand's death on the 30th of October 1883 at Ajmer. He joined the Arya Samaj, and in 1888, he was appointed President of the Ajmer Samaj and also President of the Pratinidhi Sabha (representative committee of the Arya Samajes) of Rajputana. In 1890, he was appointed a member of the Paropkarini Sabha which is a body of twenty-three members appointed by Swami Dayanand Saraswati by his Will to carry on and administer his works after him. He was appointed Joint Secretary of the Paropkarini Sabha in 1894 when the office of the Sabha was brought from Udaipur to Ajmer, while Pandya Mohanlal, the then Secretary, remained in Udaipur. On Pandya Mohanlal's resignation and retirement to Muttra, Mr. Har Bilas Sarda became the sole Secretary which office he still holds.

In connection with the Dayanand Ashram at Ajmer, he started the D. A. V. School as a branch of the

Ashram. He took a prominent part in arranging to hold Dayanand's *Birth Centenary* which was successfully held at Muttra in 1925. When the Semi-Centenary of Swami Dayanand's death was celebrated in Ajmer in 1933, he was General Secretary of the function and had to devote himself entirely to it. It was through his efforts that the celebration was a grand success. He also planned and successfully carried out the work of compiling and publishing the *Dayanand Commemoration Volume*, an excellent and useful publication.

HIS POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

On his retirement from Government Service in January 1924, he was elected a member of the Legislative Assembly from Ajmer-Merwara, when that province was given the right to return a member to the Assembly. He was re-elected in 1926 and again in 1930. He was a prominent member of the Nationalist Party in the Assembly and was elected its Deputy Leader in 1932. In 1932, he was elected to the panel of Chairmen of the Assembly and twice occupied the Chair in that capacity. He was also a member of the Petitions Committee of the Assembly. In 1930 he was made a member of the Primary Education Committee appointed by the Government of India to report on Primary Education in the provinces under the direct administration of the Government of India. In 1932 he was elected to the Retrenchment Committee of the Government of India and was a prominent member of the General Purposes Sub-Committee. For several years he was a prominent member of the Standing Finance Committee of the Legislative Assembly. He was also a member of several special committees, and was for sometime President of the House Committee of the Legislative Assembly. In 1931, he was appointed a member of the B. B. &. C. I. Railway Advisory

STANDING FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1933, A.D.



HAR BILAS SARDA: SIXTH FROM THE LEFT (Sitting).

Committee which office he still holds. In 1925 he was elected President of the All India Vaishya Conference held at Bareilly; and in 1930 he was elected President of the premier social reform organization in India, the Indian National Social Conference which held its forty-fourth Session at Lahore. He was appointed a member of the Ajmer Municipal Administration Enquiry Committee in 1933, and was elected Senior Vice-Chairman of the New Municipal Committee in 1934.

He was always an active member of the Legislative Assembly where he achieved the unique distinction of getting three non-official bills passed, two of which are the Child-Marriage Restraint Act and the Ajmer-Merwara Court Fee Amendment Act. These were placed on the Statute Book Another bill, called the Ajmer-Merwara Juvenile Smoking Bill, was passed by the Legislative Assembly but was thrown out by the Council of State. The Child-Marriage Restraint Act has made his name a household word in India. He also introduced in the Legislative Assembly a Bill to give the Hindu Widow a right in family property but, owing to Government opposition, it was thrown out. It is hoped, however, that others will hereafter take up this measure and will successfully pilot it through.

AS AN AUTHOR AND SCHOLAR

Mr. Sarda is the author of the following books and monographs:

1. Hindu Superiority.
2. Ajmer: Historical and Descriptive.
3. Maharana Kumbha.
4. Maharana Sāngā.
5. Maharaja Hammir of Ranthambhor.

But he will chiefly be remembered by his well-known book, *Hindu Superiority*. In that book he has given a

mass of valuable and varied testimony from different sources to the high virtues and achievements of the ancient Hindus when they formed a single homogenous nation. He has tried in that book to establish his theory of their superiority in culture and civilization. As *The Daily News* (of London) says:

> "The ancient constitution of India and the social system stand out in gorgeous colours against the sombre background of latter day degeneration. The author enlarges on the glories of Indian literature as represented particularly in epic poetry and philosophy. Learning as embodied in scientific discoveries and mathematical theory, craftsmanship and the arts, commerce and wealth, all receive special consideration, and in every case he seeks to demonstrate the unique superiority of the Ancient Hindus."

The *Liberty Review* of London says:

> "The facts which he brings forward to establish the preeminence of India in every department and sphere of human activity are of a character which it would be difficult to dispute, and the style in which they are set forth is both clear and picturesque."

His theory may, to some over-critical, alien or unacquainted minds, sound like an exaggeration, but the great virtue of the book lies in the fact that the author has not cited the opinions of *Hindu Pandits* and *scholars* as these might be said to be naturally partial to their own country and its achievements in the past, but the opinions of some of the eminent scholars and savants of Europe who had opportunities of studying History and examining the accomplishments of India in the past.

The author has been a keen and omnivorous reader from his boyhood, and made good use of his studies by noting and marshalling the opinions of the authors read by him. And the result was, *The Hindu Superiority*. In presenting a bird's eye-view of the

achievements of the ancient Hindus, his object is "to invite the attention of thoughtful people to the leading features of the ancient civilization of the Hindus which enabled the inhabitants of this country to contribute so much to the material and moral well-being of mankind." And India must ever be grateful to Mr. Sarda for revealing and demonstrating this fact.

Race pride and prejudice has been the characteristic of each country and each race in different parts of the world. Every civilized country, ancient and modern, has tried to blow its own trumpet, high and loud, to prove that its people were or are the chosen race, that they were or are superior in their civilization to all others. The publication of Mr. Sarda's book was, at the time and under the circumstances, most opportune. Looking to the course of civilization, we find that the march of humanity has not been in a regular, continuous, straight line, but has been somewhat irregular and haphazard. In truth, the best of civilizations has been but an amalgum of good and bad, not all gold, nor all alloy, but a mixture of both. Even in the high and palmy days of ancient India, its civilization had its own peculiar defects and drawbacks which an impartial, critical study of the old scriptures, epics and literature will disclose. But on the whole it was a wonderful civilization—wonderful for that day—which contributed its quota to the progress of man. There were several civilizations in this world that rose, flourished and set. And each one has contributed its share to the social development of man. There was ancient Egypt, Babylonia, Syria, Persia, China, India, Greece and Rome. Later, we come to the history of the mediœval Europe and its Dark Ages, followed by Islamic Culture and civilization. These were followed by the modern civilizations of Europe, Asia and America. All countries, big and small, and all times, past and present,

have taken a hand in building up the present civilization. As the poet Longfellow tells us:

All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time;

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

As a Scholar: Mr. Har Bilas Sarda has contributed papers containing original research work to the *Journal* of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, and to the *Indian Antiquary*. He also read a paper before the First Oriental Conference at Poona in 1921. He was elected a member of the Royal Society of Literature, Great Britain and Ireland; Royal Asiatic Society, Great Britain and Ireland; a Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society of London; Statistical Society of Boston, United States, America; a Member of the Teacher's Guild of Great Britain and Ireland; an Associate of the Royal Archæological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland.

AS A TEACHER, REFORMER AND LEGISLATOR

Well-fortified with all the weapons of offence and defence, Mr. Har Bilas Sarda,—may his name and memory be ever blessed and cherished!—appeared on the scene and battled with the gigantic evil of *child marriage*, and after years of hard and strenuous fight, with superb courage, tact and conciliation displayed towards the hostile forces arrayed against him, succeeded in having it recognized and placed on the statute book of India as a crime, as an offence punishable by law. There are even now some die-hards of the old school, some antiquated fossils of the bye-gone stone-age still surviving in the twentieth century, who are still raising their clamours and croakings against the new law. They are however, in a

helpless minority which goes on dwindling every year. But the pity of it is that, while so recognized as a crime, the punishment provided for it is too halting, too light and inadequate for the offender or offenders, instead of being deterrent as it should be. All the same the whole country now knows that child marriage has been a damnable curse, as damnable as *Sati*. Though not so revolting as *Sati*, it was more insidious, far-reaching and disastrous in its consequences. The people knew it but they were powerless in the face of the pitiless custom. As the Age of Consent Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1928, comparing the evil of *Sati* with the evil of child marriage, resulting in early maternity which again has led to maternal and infantile mortality, has these pertinent remarks:

> "Cases of *Sati* were few and far between. They compelled attention by the enormity of the evil in individual cases, by the intense agony of the burning widow, and the terrible shock they gave to human feelings. But after all they were cases of individual suffering; the agony ended with the martyr. In the case of early maternity (following child marriage), however, the evil is so widespread and affects such a large number of women, both among Hindus and Muslims, as to necessitate redress. It is so extensive as to affect the whole framework of society. After going through the ordeal, if a woman survives to the age of thirty, she is in many cases an old woman, almost a shadow of her former self. Her life is a long lingering misery and she is a sacrifice at the altar of custom. The evil is so insidious in all the manifold aspects of social life that people have ceased to think of its shocking effects on the whole social fabric....If legislation was justified for preventing *Sati*, there is ample justification for legislation to prevent early maternity both on grounds of humanity and in furtherance of social justice."

And the wonder is that the intelligentia stood this great, corroding social evil so long; and that the

different Governments, Indian and British, allowed and tolerated it so long. So far as I know, Dayanand Saraswati, was the first among the Brahmins who became a powerful reformer and hurled his denunciations and protests against it. He attacked it with all the weapons of *Shastric* lore, elementary science, logic, argument, sarcasm and ridicule. He used to call the modern Hindus, pygmies, children's children, weaklings, slaves enchained by harmful, senseless customs. He used to give them several examples to show the evil consequences of child marriage. I remember him referring to a half-ripe mango fruit and its immature seed, producing a very immature, weak mango tree How can a sickly, immature seed fructify into a healthy and vigorous plant? A healthy seed requires a healthy soil, sun, air and all the other favourable elements for its fullest growth and expansion. The enormity of the evil according to Dayanand was self-evident. There was no *Shastric* support or authority for it. He thus prepared the ground and roused the public reason and conscience against it, but he could not break down the popular apathy. The people were convinced, but they were timid, custom-bound, and helpless.

But when devitalizing evils and demoralizing practices are once started, encouraged, sanctioned, and sanctified by the priests, they strike their roots like noxious weeds deep and wide on every side in society. To uproot them, vocal denunciation alone is not enough. The aid of the State, by penal legislation, by education, by legal and judicial methods, by creating public opinion against the evil, is essential. Mr. Sarda cites some medical authorities. Dr. Lancaster in his book, *Tuberculosis in India*, shows what a frightful, tragic evil, child marriage is:

"People forget the fearful strain upon the constitution of a delicate girl of fourteen years or less, which results from

> the thoughtless incontinence of the newly married boy, or still more, the pitiless incontinence of the remarried man. Serious as these causes of strain are upon the health of the young married girl, they sink into insignificance in comparison with the stress of maternity which follows......The process of reproduction should be delayed until the body, as a whole, shall have attained its full development and be prepared for this great crisis. For. in no other crisis of life does the ultimate result depend so much upon the physical condition of the body."

After exposing the harmful, undermining, life-sapping nature of child and infant marriages, with their inevitable consequences, early maternity and maternal and infantile mortality, Mr. Sarda rightly invokes the aid of legislation in these words:

> A great English writer has said that, where large communities are concerned, legislation is the only effective means of accomplishing social reform....There are certain matters of a serious nature in which considerations of humanity and the inalienable rights of a human being—and that human being, an innocent and helpless child—call for the immediate intervention of the Legislature. The present Bill, Sir, concerns one of those matters. In order to protect the inalienable rights of the innocent children and to concede to them the right to live their lives, it is necessary that infant marriages and child marriages must come to an end at once. These evils have dangerously lowered the vitality of the people, stunted their growth, and barred their way to prosperity and happiness.

As a teacher and reformer, Mr. Sarda has intelligently grasped and emphasized certain important truths that make for human progress. He has shown that whatever progress man has made in the past was due to the use of the faculty of reason and reflection, and the same instrumentality must ever be at work in the present as well as in the future, or else we retrogress.

But we find that *human reform and progress has been blocked by certain old, ante-diluvian ideas and practices issuing from such ideas.* One of these

ideas consists in the notion of sacredness of an element, a thing, or a person. Where there is a holy scripture, it is alleged to owe its origin directly to the inspiration of the Deity. Whatever ideas, sentiments and practices are embedded and embalmed in those holy books, they are alleged to be above criticism or investigation. The same thing holds good of the notion of a sacred person in high authority, such as an infallible Pope or His Holiness the High Priest, Saint or Guru, or the King by right divine. Sentiments and ideas of this kind which are in their analysis, nothing but "sanctified absurdities," are still embalmed and enshrined in the hearts of their votaries and followers.

There are, two types of mind opposed to each other. One type, mostly of a religious turn, looks to the past as the pattern of perfection, as the golden age, as the Satyuga of the Hindus, and sighs for a return of it. Another type looks forward to the future as the parent of a nobler race yet to be. These two points of view have even prevailed among historians, old and modern. We see the prototypes of these two minds in every society. One type boasts of his glorious ancestors, their high birth and civilization and wealth, but is himself now debased, destitute and fallen. Another type does not boast of his ancestry, believes in the equality and fraternity of mankind, cares not for the poverty, obscurity and lowliness of descent, birth and upbringing, but values all who by native talents, hard work and perseverance have risen to distinction, dignity and affluence Mr. Sarda does not belong to the first type. This is clear from his own words:

> "My purpose in describing in detail the leading features of the social system of the Hindus is not to advocate its revival. The object is only to show that the elasticity of the social system of ancient India and the freedom which it gave to individuals to live the life that suited them best, enabled the people to achieve good results. Back to the past is not

my cry......We must be prepared to accept new things as circumstances require and we find them helpful."

Every great reformer and legislator knows that different systems or schemes of life customs, laws, ideas and institutions are the results of and are necessitated by the conditions of the time, the extent and quality of knowledge, information, education and environment, and that the mind of man interprets the facts and phenomena of existence in terms of them As Mr Saunders has well said:

> "The tendencies of a man's own mind, interpret the facts in accordance with his own nature (with his knowledge), he elaborates a system containing, perhaps, a grain of truth, to which the whole life is then made to conform, the facts purporting to be the foundations of the theory, and the theory in its turn giving its own colour to the facts."

We must therefore be ever on our guard against the error of manipulating the facts to suit old, outworn and untenable ideas and theories Some of these took their rise and grew and flourished in a relatively cramped, primitive environment of ignorance, awe and wonder; others in circumstances and environment which have long disappeared

Mr Sarda calls attention to a number of fundamental truths. These he considers so wholesome and life-invigorating that they should be constantly kept before our minds. To quote his words: "History blazes forth certain truths, which wise men have learnt, which men with eyes can see, but which doomed nations and men neither see nor understand." The reader will find such truths scattered all over his writings and speeches Here are a few of them:—

1 *The Law of adaptation to a constantly changing environment*:

> "When this adjustment is broken, the life of a society is threatened and its progress and prosperity stopped.

Constant adjustment of relations is therefore a condition of healthy growth."

This entails on us the absolute necessity for revising repealing or rejecting old obnoxious laws, customs, ideas and traditions, and replacing them by more true, apt, and wholesome ones.

2. *The Supremacy of Reason as our Chief Guide in Life*:

"Reason is the compass of life. Leave it behind and you embark on a sea of troubles. Dethrone Reason, and Superstition usurps its place and Tyranny is the result..."

And he quotes Ingersoll: "Reason is a small and feeble flame, yet it is the only light we possess." He therefore exhorts us to "judge every custom, every practice, every dogma, every commandment, in the light of Reason that is in us."

3. *Right Valuation of Authority*:—"Authority, not based on Reason, stifles action and bars progress." He quotes Ingersoll about *custom* becoming "a prison locked and barred by those who long ago were dust, and the keys of which are in the keeping of the dead." He further emphasizes the point by saying:

"The history of nations shows that when authority takes the place of reason, religion becomes the chief instrument of a nation's fall......But where authority is founded on reason, or is not opposed to reason, as the authority of the loving parent, the authority of a just law or custom, or the authority to which one has given his free and willing consent, that authority must be respected and obeyed."

Another ardent patriot and scholar of India, Dr. Paranjapye, is of the same opinion and expresses it in his '*Crux of the Indian Problem*,' in these words: "The excessive deference to authority in all spheres and the slight regard paid to the reasoning faculty, are the main characteristics of the Indian people. They are the cause of most of the troubles from which their country is suffering."

There is still so much confusion, particularly among our conservative and Sanatanist friends, about the right valuation of Authority that I wish to throw more light on the subject by the convincing arguments of another clear thinker, Thomas Paine, in his reply to Burke:

> Who authorized or who could authorize one Age to bind other Ages?...Mr. Burke tells us that a certain body of men, who existed a hundred years ago, made a law; and that there does not now exist in the nation, nor ever will, nor ever can, a power to alter it....But, from what, or from whence, does Mr. Burke prove the right of any human power to bind posterity for ever? He has produced no proof that such a right existed and how it existed. If it existed before, it must exist now; for, whatever appertains to the nature of man, cannot be annihilated by man. It is the nature of man to die, and he will continue to die as long as he continues to be born......Although laws, made in one generation, often continue in force through succeeding generations, yet they continue to derive their force from the consent of the living. A law not repealed continues in force, not because it cannot be repealed, but because it is not repealed; and the non-repealing passes for consent...... Immortal Power is not a human right...The circumstances of the world are continually changing, and the opinions of men change also. And as government is for the living, and not for the dead, it is the living only that have any right on it. That which may be thought right and found convenient in one age, may be thought wrong and found inconvenient in another. In such cases, who is to decide, the living or the dead?"

4. *Progress is Unity.* By this is meant that progress is possible only when there is an advance both in the political, and social spheres, "Social and political reforms are so intimately connected with each other that the neglect of the one vitally injures the other. They act and react on each other. Social disintegration ends in political subjection and *vice versa.*"

5. *Humanity is one.* As Mr. Sarda says: "It is a matter of shame that those who believe in

वसुधैवकुटुम्बकं *Vasudhaeva Kutambkam*, which means that mankind is one family; whose *Śāstras* teach them that all men are brethren, and that there is a divine essence in every man, woman and child, should practise untouchability and regard certain classes of men and women as untouchables." In another place, he has emphasized the same truth: "The interests of the country require that our social system must be modified so as to admit of social connections being established with people belonging to different denominations and faiths in the country."

6. *Equality of Status and of Rights between the Sexes.* In addition to this, he has put forth the plea for larger justice, equity, liberty and fraternity among mankind. If we fix our eyes on these truths and act on them, then the future of our country will indeed be brighter and more assured.

7. *Power of Ideas and the Need of Correcting and Reforming Them*:—Man has ever been governed and swayed by ideas, opinions, doctrines, true or false, real or fanciful. Such ideas, when impressed on our minds in our childhood and youth, become hard mental habits which become so difficult later on to change, modify or replace. We see everywhere how they become the directing forces, somewhat like those impulses which we call by the name of instincts. Right ideas have led man on the right path, wrong ideas have led him on the wrong. But the latter ones, coming much earlier in the field, have got a firm strong-hold on his mind and hence their development has gone on almost un-impeded from primitive times. And the one problem for modern science and education has been how to discard the old false ideas, and how to introduce and fix the new and true ones in their place. For we know that, if we cannot change a man's ideas, we cannot change his actions.

At the back of every ceremonial, sign and symbol,

practice and usage, lies an idea, conscious or unconscious, visible or invisible. What are our theories, ideals, opinions, conclusions but so many ideas? What is religion but a set of ideas? The same is the case with every institution,—monarchy, aristocracy, church, caste, custom, codes of laws and rules. All revolutions and reforms at first spring from, and are eventually wrought by, ideas. We thus see that progress consist in corrrecting and reforming our ideas, in accepting, adopting and acting on better and more useful ideas. And these, put on a wider and higher basis, become our ideals. Mr. Sarda advises his countrymen to reject the ante-diluvian ideas and notions, traditions and customs, to stick not to the worn-out dead ideas, as these impede our progress. In his third speech on the Child Marriage Bill, he thus exhorts the Members of the Legislative Assembly and, through them, his countrymen:

> "I beg you gentlemen to brush aside all objections, sacerdotal or profane, ancient or modern, based on tradition or custom which stint our growth or stand in the way of our achieving our goal. Listen not, gentlemen, to ante-diluvian notions which have spent their force; stick not to the worn-out dead ideas, but live in the present, the living present, and fix your eyes steadfastly on the future,—the glorious future of our country."

Our ideas generally go under different forms and names, opinions, notions, conceptions, views, theories, generalizations, doctrines beliefs, etc. Among them may be mentioned Fatalism, Kismat, Predestination, operation of an autocratic Divine will. These ideas have been handed down from an ignorant past and have now become in stagnant societies articles of blind faith. They express unscientific conceptions of causation, and bar the way to a full and free exercise of reason, reflection, experiment and analysis. They have such a strong tendency to excuse all inexcusable indifference,

negligence, aimless drifting on the sea of life, resignation, reluctance to reform individual and social evils and to establish better and healthier conditions of human life. Fatalism and the allied doctrines stand for the creed that all experiences and acts of men are predetermined by an immoveable, inexorable Fate, and that human effort cannot alter the course of things. Mr. Sarda does not subscribe to this creed. This is clear from his sage observation:

> "With oriental fatalism, the Eastern poet ascribes the injustices of the world to Fate, while the practical worker of the West denounces them as the faults and shortcomings of social, political or religious organizations, and works to remove them."

RECOGNITION OF HIS WORTH AND WORK.

When the World-War broke out in 1914 and Publicity Boards were formed in every province in India, Mr. Sarda was selected as the Honorary Secretary of the Ajmer-Merwara Publicity Board; and, for his services in connection with the war activities, he was made a *Rai Saheb* and was mentioned in the Despatch of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief. He was given the title of *Diwan Bahadur* in 1931 for his work in the Legislative Assembly.

It was a tardy recognition of his merits and services to the country by a partial and grudging Government. In the case of Mr. Sarda, the titles bestowed on him are too petty to do full justice to his great character and many-sided activities.

I have known him intimately for over half a century and have been struck with his high and varied attainments. *As a judge* (both on the Bench and outside) of persons, their acts and attitudes in private and public life, he is quick in comprehension, sound, just and well-reasoned in his judgments. *As a writer and author*, his several books will bespeak his merits. *As a debater and conversationalist* he is brilliant,

polished and pertinent. I have heard him speak several times at semi-public meetings, and he was always complimented as *a fine public speaker.* He is also a good narrator of historical events of Rajputana. On several occasions he was asked, while on a short visit to my house in Bangalore, by my friends to give them some incidents of Rajput History; and each time that he obliged us, we were so amazed with his retentive memory, logical sequence, charming style, and descriptive powers that we heard him spell-bound even for a couple of hours.

Let me hope, however, that Mr. Sarda will be better honoured, recognized and remembered by his countrymen. He has already been widely and deeply appreciated, congratulated, complimented and thanked by the intelligentia among the different classes and communities of India. Here is one typical appreciation, from Colonel Sir Henry Gidney, KT., M. L. A., J. P., President, of the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association, India and Burma:

> "He has done excellent service to India, and the country has every reason to be proud of him. His Sarda Act is one of the far-reaching social reforms and in the years to come, Har Bilas's name will be honoured by one and all. Indeed those who throw stones at him today will tomorrow pick them up and with these very stones, erect a statue in his memory as a leader of his community and its member in Legislative Assembly."

"Many more examples of a like nature might be given. But they are hardly fit for a place in a brief sketch. The Child Marriage Restraint Act is practically known all over India as the Sarda Act for which he has been highly extolled and honoured as a great benefactor to the rising generations all over India."

His name will long be remembered in Indian history along with those of the other reformers, such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshab Chander Sen, Dayanand

and others of the last century and a number of other stalwarts of the present century, who agitated for and finally succeeded in getting fully or partially abolished or modified the odious, pernicious and inhuman customs of *Sati*, Child Marriage, Child Widowhood, refusal of common elementary rights to women who form half the humankind, Human untouchability, and rigidity of caste and creed which prevents the fusion of different races inhabiting India. Mr. Sarda should fitly be placed among the ranks of the nation-builders. For, I consider that those who have long and laboriously worked for the removal of harmful and hateful political, social. or religious laws, usages and customs; or for the establishment of communal and religious union and harmony; or for mental emancipation by breaking the fetters of superstition and unreason; or for the larger liberty, equality and fraternity of mankind; or for the better self-government of man,—have a just claim to the title of Nation Builders.

Some day India will properly recognise the services rendered to her by such sober and yet ardent and sincere patriots and reformers by erecting suitable memorials to them not only in their birthplace but in all the capital towns. Such memorials have an educative value as they are calculated to inspire future generations with the true and lofty ideas, efforts and achievements of such persons.

PART I

SOCIAL REFORM

Ponder well and know the right,
Onward, then, with all thy might;
Haste not,—years can never atone
For one reckless act alone.

Rest not, life is sweeping by;
Do and dare before you die;
Something worthy or sublime
Leave behind to conquer time.

Haste not, rest not, calmly wait;
Manly brave the storms of Fate;
Duty be thy polar guide,
Do the right, whate'er betide.

(Goethe: translated by Carlyle)

SOCIAL REFORM[1]

We will renew the times of truth and justice,
Condensing in a fair free commonwealth
Not rash equality but equal rights,
Proportion'd like the columns to the temple,
Giving and taking strength reciprocal,
And making firm the whole with grace and beauty.

BYRON, *Doge of Venice.*

I MUST thank the Chairman and the members of the Reception Committee of the fortysecond session of the Indian National Social Conference for the honour they have done me in asking me to preside at this year's momentous session. While I appreciate the great honour done to me, I am not unconscious of the fact that the office, to which I have been called, imposes upon me heavy obligations and responsibilities, especially as, after the passing of important social legislation by the Central Legislature this year, we have entered upon a stage in the evolution of our social life when the eyes of the whole world are fixed upon India, and the people of Europe and America and the advanced countries of Asia are watching us to see how we deal with those great social problems peculiar to India—problems which have long stood in the way of our progress—and whether we possess the necessary courage, intelligence and wisdom to solve them satisfactorily. For, by the results of our efforts in that direction, they will judge whether we possess the qualities necessary to enable our great country to retrieve her lost position.

[1]Presidential address delivered at the Fortysecond Session of the Indian National Social Conference held at Lahore on 26 December 1929 A.D.

We have, therefore, to bring all the ability, wisdom and courage we possess, to bear on the deliberations of this distinguished assembly representing as it does, the accumulated intelligence and united experience of social India. And I have ventured to take part in the deliberations of this august body, because of my burning desire to serve my country, my unflagging interest in the social welfare of its people, my pride in her past and my unshakable belief in her great future. And if we continue to bring to the solution of the various social problems that face us the same spirit, wisdom and courage which have been shown by the representatives of the nation in the Legislative Assembly in dealing with the question of Child Marriage—one of the greatest evils from which our country has long been suffering—there can be little doubt that the dawn of a happier era is near and that our woes and troubles will soon come to an end.

Gentlemen, while the fundamental principles of life remain permanent and unchangeable, the conditions of life keep ever changing, owing to the conflicting interests of individuals and communities and the varying needs and requirements of the nations of the world in different stages of evolution. In view of this constant change, it is necessary to maintain a proper adjustment of relations between the facts and conditions of existence and our acts and practices in order to secure a healthy life and growth of society. When this adjustment is broken, the life of a society is threatened and its progress and prosperity stopped. *Constant adjustment of relations is therefore a condition of healthy growth.* In other words, reform, political and social, is the necessity of a healthy state of society. We in this conference are concerned only with the social aspects of Indian life, and our deliberations are to be confined to the consideration of social matters. A wise people therefore is always ready for reform, where

and when necessary. It will never nail its colours to the product or embodiment of a particular aspect or condition of life and say, we are wedded to it and by it we stand or fall. The principles of life, which guide us in readjusting relations are, as stated before, always true and unchanging; and we must always hold by them. But the products of forces, generated by adjustment of relations, such as individual acts, customs, practices or attitudes towards things, must change according as the conditions of life change. A readiness to revise the valuations of facts and standards of life, whenever necessary or called for, is essential to the continuance and growth of social life. Thus only can a social system be kept as a living and growing organism, and thus only can social life lead to a healthy and vigorous national life.

Both the social and the political aspects of life are equally important as they touch every individual member of society at every point of his life, and his well-being and happiness are promoted or retarded according as a proper and timely readjustment of relations is effected or neglected. This is why, social and political reforms are so intimately connected with each other that the neglect of the one vitally injures the other. They act and react on each other. Social reform, by releasing forces hitherto held in check and by generating others, gives dynamic force to the movement of political reform just as political emancipation powerfully helps to bring about readjustment of social relations and facilitate social reform. The emancipation of the mind from thraldom, individual or communal, whether in the social sphere or the political, broadens the vision, quickens the impulses, strengthens the will and has an elating effect on every fibre of the person or persons emancipated, leading automatically to the breaking of chains in the other sphere. This truth is summed up in the aphorism, 'Progress is Unity.' Social

and political advancement must therefore go hand in hand. Any effort in one direction only, to the neglect of the other, will be infructuous and of little value.

We all know that India had a glorious past and that her achievements in the various domains of human activity were great. One great reason for this was that her social constitution was very elastic and gave freedom to individuals. It did not hamper growth but afforded full and free scope for their activities in all directions.

The structure of society was based on two institutions peculiar to India: (1) Varnashrama and (2) the Joint Family System. The Varnashrama meant the division of the people into four classes—Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishas and Sudras. Those who devoted themselves to acquiring and imparting knowledge and dedicated their lives to the development of mental and spiritual powers, and guided the counsels of the nation, were called Brahmans and were accorded a place of honour in society. Their ideal was self-denial. They did not seek wealth or material advancement. Their rule of life was high thinking and plain living. They were therefore accorded the position which in the modern world, wealth and worldly power alone give. They thus enjoyed all the benefits which wealth and power confer without their drawbacks.

The ideal of the Kshatriyas was not how best to live, but *how best to die.* Self-agrandisement was not their aim: service was their *summum bonum* in life. The Rajputs, the descendants of the Kshatriyas, illustrated in their lives the high ideals of the warrior class. To die worthily in a worthy cause or "to make the mother's milk resplendent" was their chief solicitude. The Rajputs in days gone by "loved strife, and sought opportunities of dying in a just cause." To die gloriously was what they lived for. The history of India is full of instances that prove this distinguishing feature of their character. The outburst

of Devaldevi, the mother of the celebrated heroes, Ala and Udil, on their refusal to return to Mahoba to fight for their country on its invasion by Emperor Prithviraj sums up Rajput character in a sentence. She exclaimed:—

"Would that the gods had made me barren, that I had never borne sons who thus abandon the path of the Rajput and refuse to succour their prince and country in danger. Her heart bursting with grief, her eyes raised to heaven, she continued: "Was it for this, O Universal Lord, Thou madest me feel a mother's pangs for these destroyers of Binafur's fame? Unworthy offspring, *the heart of a true Rajput dances with joy at the mere name of strife*, but ye, degenerate, cannot be the sons of Jasraj. Some carl must have stolen to my embrace and from such ye must be sprung."

This was irresistible. The two heroes declared they would die fighting for Mahoba. On this, Devaldevi addressing the eldest son, said:—

"Well hast thou spoken my son. Nothing now remains but to *make thy parent's milk resplendent by thy deeds.* The calls of the peasant driven from his home meets the ear, and, while we deliberate, our villages are given to the flames.

Ala added:—

"He who can look tamely on while the smoke rises from his ruined towns, his fields laid waste, can be no Rajput. *He who succumbs to fear when his country is invaded,* his body will be plunged into the Hell of Hells, his soul a wanderer in the world of spirits for sixty thousand years; but the warrior who performs his duty will be received into the mansions of the Sun and his deeds will last for ever.

In the third division came the Vaishas. They were engaged in industry and trade. They produced things and distributed them and accummulated wealth and material resources. They were men of intelligence, industry and courage. They went to every part of the world and had the strength of arm to defend their lives and property. The Vaishas were the mainstay of society. Those who were unfitted to follow any of

the above mentioned three callings supplied labour and served the other three classes.

These four classes however were not rigidly exclusive of each other. In the same family one was a Brahman, the other a Kshatriya and the third a Vaisha. The Hindu scriptures themselves illustrate this feature of the Varnashrama system. The *Puranas* say that Raja Yuvnāshav of the solar dynasty had a son called Harita. Harita's son became a Brahman and his descendants were known as Āngiris Harit. The *Vishnu Purana* and *Bhagwad* say that Raja Nèdishta's son Nābhāg became a Vaisha. Raja Suhotra of the lunar dynasty had three sons, Kāsh, Lésh, and Gritsmad. The latter's son Shunak had a son called Shainak. Shainak's sons became Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisha and Sudra respectively. Take another instance. Kushik was the son of Raja Kushashva of the lunar dynasty. His grandson Vishwāmitrā's descendants are known in India as Brahmans of the Kaushik *gotra*.

Individuals and communities took up the callings and pursuits that suited them and afforded free and full development to the physical, mental and moral qualities with which nature had endowed them. *There was no rigid, hide-bound, watertight system of caste in the old days.* The classification was based on individual गुण, कर्म, स्वभाव (qualities, actions and temperament). But for all practical purposes of social life, they formed one class. There was perfect adjustment between the requirements of the time, the needs of the nation and the material required fully to satisfy those wants. People were thus enabled to make the best use of their talents and opportunities for their own happiness and prosperity, and employ them, when necessary, in the service of the nation.

Coming now to the application of the theoretical propositions enunciated above to the practical facts of social life in our country at the present time, we find

that our social life is at a very low ebb; that society is cut up into castes and sub-castes, and the sub-castes are again divided into smaller groups all exclusive of one another, with restrictions regarding food, marriage and association carried to a point beyond which this fissiparous tendency could not go. This, with the resultant narrow view of things, and the lowering of high ideals of conduct, made the nation impotent to protect itself from foreign inroads, and powerless to withstand the impact of forces foreign to its constitution. The result was social disintegration ending in political subjection. The history of India illustrates most clearly how social evils have inevitably led to political degradation. In Ancient India, a free and elastic social system went hand in hand with political liberty and economic prosperity.

JOINT FAMILY SYSTEM

The joint family system was a contrivance which the Hindu economists and social thinkers invented in order to maintain the traditions of the race, and give stability and continuity to family life, for the *family* and not the individual was the unit in the social system. The two bases on which the system rested, were (*a*) co-operation or mutual help between those who were nearest in blood and bound by ties created by nature herself, and (*b*) the care and protection of the weak and afflicted among them. This institution made for peace and order, promoted unity and prevented disintegration. But it did not ensure progress. So long as it worked properly, no necessity was felt for such institutions of the West as Poor Houses, Old Age Pensions and Poor Laws. But the joint family system was a product of the peculiar circumstances in which society was placed at the time. The system worked successfully and did useful work when the country was self-contained and self governed; when the population was homogeneous

and differences of religion were not serious; when education was in the hands of the nation, and society was not subjected to the impact of foreign influences; and, lastly, when life moved in a narrow sphere. But things are completely changed now. India has long ceased to be self-governed and is no longer self-contained. The population is no longer homogeneous: religious differences are tearing the society asunder: education is in foreign hands. The impact of foreign influences, political, economic and social, is disintegrating society. New ideals of life and conduct, due partly to the introduction of foreign culture and partly to a new valuation of things, which both are being increasingly accepted in the country, resulting in the rejection of the principles and ideals on which the system was based are undermining it and must ultimately destroy it. Moreover, life has now begun to flow in much wider channels. Take the case of a father who lives in Simla and has four sons. One is a doctor in Lahore, another a contractor in Delhi, the third a shopkeeper in Agra, the fourth an Inspector in railway service, one day here and the next in another place, thus all having different interests, moving in different circles and forming no corporate life. Is it possible for them all long to form a joint family ?

The *Varnashrama* has disappeared giving place to the present caste system. And the joint family system, which took away the personal rights of individuals and bestowed them on a corporate body—the family—has now ceased to function as originally intended. Naturally, the adjustment between the actual facts of life and the necessities of personal happiness and social welfare is completely broken.

My purpose in describing in detail the leading features of the social system of the Hindus is not to advocate its revival. The object is only to show that the elasticity of the social system of ancient India,

and the freedom it gave to individuals to live the life that suited them best, enabled the people to achieve good results. Back to the past is not my cry. This, however, does not mean that we must discard everything that is old. Much of what is old has stood the test of time and has proved its efficacy; and we must retain what has been proved to be sound in the past. But we must be prepared to accept new things as circumstances require and we find them helpful. The interests of the country require that our social system must be modified so as to admit of social connections being established with people belonging to different denominations and faiths in the country. Economic forces beyond our control and foreign trade relations demand that the limitations and restrictions necessitated by a strict observance of the caste and other social conventions must be removed.

METHOD OF REFORM

As for the methods of social reform, there exist at present in India two ways in which reforms can be introduced: (a) public opinion crystalised into caste or communal regulations and (b) legislation. If the caste organizations were at the present time effective and fully operative, a great deal of social reform could be carried out through those organizations. But the caste system having lost its authoritative efficacy and its power to enforce discipline, the work done in old days through this agency cannot now be so accomplished. The only sure means of effecting social reform now is legislation. As a great English writer has said, where large communities or numbers are concerned, *legislation is the only effective means of carrying out social reform.* There is no country in the world where important social reform has been accomplished by means other than legislation. Those who contend that social reform should be carried out only by educating

public opinion and through the agency of caste or communal organizations, have failed to understand the real nature of reform and the function of legislation. Nor do they appreciate the gravity of the situation. Reform becomes necessary where the rights of individuals are withheld or denied. As the caste agency has no legal sanction behind it and is powerless to have those rights respected, the aggrieved party has every right to appeal to the State, whose primary duty is to see that the rights of individuals living within its jurisdiction are protected. We see this in daily life. When a right to land or money is invaded or the terms of a contract are broken, if an amicable settlement by the intervention of friends is not arrived at, the aggrieved individual appeals to the State and the courts of law enforce the right. If the just rights of a woman, on the exercise of which her happiness depends, cannot be protected by society; if public opinion or caste organizations have not the power or the inclination to redress her wrongs, it is the legitimate right of the woman to appeal to the State for protection. It is the inherent right of a child to get nourishment, to be allowed to grow up and develop physically and mentally. If food or protection are refused to it by parents, or if a child is sought to be sacrificed as an offering to some deity or to save the parents from expense, or fear of ignominy (*vide* the annals of infanticide) the law must step in to save it. Similarly, if the parents give away a girl in her infancy in marriage, whereby she may be subjected to the cruelties of early consummation or maternity, while she is physically quite undeveloped, the girl has a right of protection by the State against the custom-sanctioned, though non-malicious, cruelty of the parents.

If the rights of a woman, who is entitled to equal treatment with man are systematically denied to her and she is treated like chattel, it is the duty of the State

to intervene. Amongst the Hindus some of the primary rights of a woman are denied to her. Even in other communities, some of her rights, though recognised by the personal law governing her, are denied to her owing to the force of custom. In the Punjab, the right of inheritance conceded to a Muslim woman by *Shariat* (Muslim law) is denied to her by customary law, and so far as her right to property is concerned, she is very nearly in the same position as her Hindu sister.

Hindu law chiefly centres round marriage, inheritance and the joint family system. The law of inheritance was based on the requirements and the incidents of the joint family. But as the joint family system is rapidly disintergrating and the individual is taking the place of the family as a unit of society, both the law of inheritance and that governing joint family must be modified in the light of changed circumstances. As the present law governing marriage was based on Varnashrama which has long since disappeared and even the caste system which took its place, is rapidly going to pieces, it is necessary that this law too must be materially modified.

It is too late in the day to object to legislative interference with the Hindu law of inheritance or of the joint family or marriage. The State, irrespective of the scruples of the orthodox, has been enacting laws in social matters. In 1870 A.D. a law was passed providing that a member of a joint Hindu family could become a Christian and yet retain all the rights and privileges of a member of the joint family. And can there be a greater interference with the Hindu marriage law than that embodied in Act III of 1872? An Act of legislature has made it possible for a Hindu widow to remarry and yet retain under certain circumstances the property of her husband.

Readjustment or reform in the social system of the

the country easily falls under three heads:

(1) Rights and welfare of children;
(2) Rights and status of women;
(3) Social rights of individuals and classes;

As regards the rights of children, an important step has recently been taken by the country in forbidding marriages of boys below eighteen and girls below fourteen years of age. This law, if duly enforced and strengthened later in the light of future experience of its working, will put a stop to child-widowhood, protect girls sometimes from early death and lifelong ill health, and will give them opportunities to receive education. The physical degeneration of the race will be arrested, and boys will have a chance of growing into sturdy men. Children are also entitled to receive such education and training as will enable them to lead decent lives in the world. For this, the State should provide the necessary facilities. It has now been universally recognised that it is the duty of the State to give primary education to every boy and girl; and we call upon our Government to recognise its obligations in this respect. In England, the State has also recognised its duty to look after the health of all children between five and fourteen years, which is the period of compulsory education there.

So long as the caste system exists we must permit and, at times, encourage inter-caste marriages. Some communities are so small that it is not possible to find within their folds, suitable matches for boys and girls. Inter-caste marriages upto a certain extent are sanctioned by the *Sastras* and they are now recognised by law. With such marriages becoming more frequent, the evil of prices being paid sometimes for bride-grooms and sometimes for brides will disappear. This pernicious practice has ruined many homes and has occasioned many suicides. Reform in this direction is urgently called for.

The social system in vogue in ancient India had its own ways to secure the welfare of women. In the changed conditions of modern India, that welfare can only be secured by according to women their natural rights, and making those rights enforceable at law. In order that those rights may be fully exercised, it is necessary to break the bonds of caste, and free men and women from the shackles which tie them to the old order of things. Men and women must have full freedom to utilize all opportunities and avenues open to them to attain their full physical, mental and moral growth, and to arm themselves with all the modern weapons used in the economic, educational and social spheres to enable them to hold their own in the deadly struggle for existence going on in the world. Then only can we successfully compete with the advanced nations of the West.

POSITION OF WOMEN

The most important question, however, as it concerns every man and woman in the country, and as it vitally affects society, is the position of woman and her rights. The woman question is in one shape or another a world-question. In India it has assumed especial importance at the present moment, as on the right and speedy solution of it, hinges the future welfare of the country. The pivot of life is the home, and the home is the woman's citadel. She is the presiding genius of the household. People test a nation's civilization from the position women occupy in it. In Islam, the most democratic religious organization in the world, theoretically her position is high and her rights are to a great extent safeguarded by law. Among the Hindus of old, she occupied a position of great respect and consideration, enjoyed great privileges and in certain respects held a dominant position in the family.

The *Rigveda* (*Mandala* 10, verse 45) says:—

"Over thy husband's father and thy husband's mother, bear full sway. Over the sisters of thy lord and over his brothers, rule supreme."

The *Shatpath Brahmana* (5, 2, 10) says:—

"She, the wife, in sooth, is half of his own self, hence as long as he does not obtain her, so long is he not regenerated; for, so long is he incomplete."

Manu says:—

"The mouth of a woman is constantly to be held in the same esteem as running water, or a beam of sunlight."—Ch. V. 133.

"Where women are honoured, there the deities are pleased; and where they are not honoured, no religious rite yields rewards. Where women live in grief, the family soon perishes, but the family where they are happy ever prospers."—Ch. III. 55.

The *Mahabharata*, the grandest of the epic poems of the world, says:—

"The wife is the best of friends: the wife is the root of three-fold worldly activity: the wife is the root of salvation."

"Strike not even with a blossom a wife guilty of hundred faults," says a Hindu sage,—"a sentiment so delicate," says Colonel Tod "that Reginald de Born, the prince of Troubadours never uttered any more refined."

Hindu scriptures show that women were given the highest education in ancient times. They were able to hold their own in philosophical and literary discussion with the most eminent scholars of the time. Gargi and Maitreyi are names well-known for their learning. Women occupied a position of equality with men in every respect. They accompanied their husbands everywhere, sometimes even to the battlefields, and fought by their side, performing deeds of valour. Kaikeyi, Satyabhama and others are instances in point.

Women enjoyed rights of property. Even in the Vedas there is mention of women growing old in their father's houses and claiming their share of the paternal estate. A wife's co-ownership of property was recognised, in that the husband could not even make a religious gift without her consent. The legal status of a wife and the equal treatment accorded to her with her husband is thus defined in law:—

1. If a wife dies, her husband may marry another. wife. (Manu, Ch. V. v. 168.)

If a husband dies, a wife may marry another husband. (Manu, quoted by Madhava and Vidyanatha Dikshita; Parasara Smriti; Narada; Yagnavalkya, quoted by Krishnacharya; Agni Purana; Smriti, quoted by Chetti Koneri Acharya and Janardana Bhatta).

2. If a wife becomes fallen by drunkenness or immorality, her husband may marry another. (Manu, Ch. IX, v. 80; Yagnavalkya, page 416, v. 73.)

If a husband becomes fallen, a wife may marry another husband (Manu, quoted by Madhava and several other authorities above mentioned).

3. If a wife be barren, her husband may marry another wife (Manu Ch. IX, v. 81).

If a husband be impotent, she may marry another husband (Manu, and other authorities quoted above).

4. In particular circumstances, a wife may cease to cohabit with her husband (Manu, Ch. IX, v, 79).

5. If a husband deserts his wife, she may marry another (Manu, Ch. IX, v. 76, and several others).

6. If a wife treats her husband with aversion, he may cease to cohabit with her (Manu, Ch. IX, v. 77).

7. A husband must be revered (Manu, Ch. V, v. 154).

A wife must be honoured by the husband (Manu, Ch. III, v. 55).

8. A good wife irradiates the house and is a goddess of wealth (Manu, Ch. IX, v. 26).

A good husband makes his wife entitled to honour (Manu, Ch. IX, v. 23).

With the political downfall of the Hindus came their social decline, and the legal position of women deteriorated. In the matter of marriage, in matters of inheritance and her position in the family, many of her rights have been taken away from her and her freedom has been restricted. But though her freedom has been restricted, and, owing to the desirability of maintaining intact the joint family system, legal power to enforce many of her rights has been taken away from her, yet it is true that the position she occupies in the family is sometimes predominant, and the influence she exercises in domestic matters almost supreme. Traducers of Indians, professional decriers of weak nations, who have made it a business to defame *subject* peoples for political purposes, like the notorious Miss Katherine Mayo, may with the aid of imagination, depict the condition of Indian women in family life as always deplorable. But those who are acquainted with the real condition of things and who have a knowledge of the working of family life in this country, know well that women occupy even now a most respected position in Indian house-holds, and that their influence remains unimpaired. The late Mrs. Ramsay Macdonald, on her return home from a tour in India with her husband, the present Prime Minister of England, declared that the influence of Hindu women in domestic and social matters was supreme and that they possessed a greater sense of honour than men.

Monogamy should be made the strict rule of life. Polygamy in its origin was an economic measure. When more men were wanted for fighting purposes and tribal strength had to be kept up, polygamy perhaps had its use. But times have changed, and this institution has now become positively harmful. Ethically, it cannot be justified; and students of Indian history

know how disastrous have been its consequences on the political welfare of the country. The history of every State in Rajputana is stamped with the dire results of this evil custom. This practice created dissensions amongst the nobles of Mewar which paralyzed the Maharana's power and allowed Babur to consolidate his position.

If a man can claim restitution of conjugal rights, a woman is equally entitled to do so, though in the case of both, such a right should be governed by considerations of the welfare and happiness of the parties.

Widow re-marriage should become as general as widower re-marriage at present is. If marriage is a sacrament, and can be performed only once in life, why is a widower allowed to perform it a second, a third, or a fourth time when a widow is not so allowed? A husband is as much subject to the conditions of the sacrament as a wife is. The evils of enforced widowhood are many and wide-spread; and apart from the great injustice it does to women, it has its repercussions in the entire field of domestic life, and produces most harmful effects on the body politic of the Hindus.

It has now also become imperative that full rights of inheritance should be secured to women. If a son gets a share in his patrimony, on what moral or spiritual grounds, can a daughter be refused her share? The natural rights of both are equal. Marriage and transplantation in another family may modify the extent of the right, but should not take it away completely. She is also entitled to a share in her husband's property. She becomes by marriage a member of her husband's family and must *ipso facto* acquire rights of property in that family. I have introduced in the Central Legislature, a bill to give the Hindu widow a right to inherit her husband's share in the family property along with her sons, if any. The key to secure and strengthen her lawful position in

the family is to give her a legally enforceable right of inheritance. As soon as her just right in family property is secured to her by law, most of her troubles will be over.

Hindu women have suffered, not at the hands of Indians only. Part of her troubles is due to the fact that India has the misfortune of having her Sastric laws interpreted and administered by strangers—strangers to her traditions, strangers to her culture and ideals and ignorant of the language in which the laws exist. Moreover, these judges were till very recently very backward in their ideas of women's rights. We know with what difficulty and after what hard struggle, the Englishwoman has been able to secure her right of franchise; while the Indians with age-long traditions of chivalry behind them have already conceded this right to women in some provinces, and are ready to give it to the rest as soon as it is desired. Mr. M. R. Jayakar, in his learned Presidential Address to the forty-first Indian National Social Conference held last year at Calcutta, said:—

"The Englishman was not accustomed until the eighties, to regard women in his own country as independently capable of acquiring or holding property. English women got this right at a very late stage. With this bias in his mind, it is not surprising that the English judge at Westminster, in interpreting ancient Indian texts written in a language which he did not understand, and of the context of which too he was personally ignorant, adopted a position inclining more towards limited female rights than towards absolute ones. In a celebrated ruling which laid down for all time that inheritance derived by women from a male in their husband's family can never become their absolute property, the Privy Council, being solely dependent upon confusing rival quotations cited on opposite sides, have actually abrogated the *Mitakshara* rule in favour of more ancient and doubtful texts vaguely prescribing an ascetic life for Hindu widows. The bias thus acquired by judical decisions has unconciously survived to the present day. The English judge in England and in India, owing to his natural caution born of his

ignorance of the language and the habits of the people, has fought shy of liberal interpretations except when compelled by the clearest evidence. The whole administration has been, so far as Hindu Law is concerened, as grievously unnatural as if Japanese judges sat at Westminster in 1928, giving rulings on the domestic laws of Englishman from Japanese translations of Bracton or Coke or Lyttleton unconcerned with the mighty social changes which had taken place in English society since those times of which they had no conception owing to their isolation.

The time has now come to put an end to the judicial system under which English judges—though capable and conscientious but ignorant of Indian traditions and ideals of life and the language in which the laws are written—are invested with power to interpret and administer Hindu Law.

UNTOUCHABILITY.

I include under the head, "Social rights of individuals and classes" such questions as interdining; free social intercourse between individuals belonging to different castes; admission in the various castes of people belonging to other faiths seeking such admission; untouchability; freedom to enter temples to offer divine worship; use of wells and tanks and public schools. It is only in this unfortunate country that one man is regarded as untouchable by another. And it is a matter of shame that those who believe in वसुधैव कुटुम्बकं (Mankind form one family), whose Sastras teach them that all men are brethren, and that there is divine essence in every man, woman and child should practice untouchability and regard certain classes of men and women as untouchables. If it is true that "*bani adam azai yak deegrand*," and if all mankind are regarded as forming one family, why should those who follow certain most useful and necessary professions be regarded as untouchables and be looked upon as less than men and women. Every one has a right to use public wells and

tanks and roads; to read in public schools maintained by public revenues; and to worship God in temples. Places of divine worship and temples are places dedicated to the Deity, and as God is the God of all peoples, irrespective of caste or colour, rich or poor, high or low, no person or persons can rightfully prevent any other class of persons from approaching the Creator and offering worship in those places. Those who do so prevent people, deny that God is the God of all mankind.

It is of prime importance for the Hindus to do away with the evil of untouchability. It has yet to be realized by them that the future of the Hindus as a community depends, to a great extent, on a proper treatment of the depressed classes, and on their whole-hearted co-operation. All well-wishers of the country must therefore see that this question is solved to the satisfaction of those classes. Fortunately, the question of untouchability except in the case of the small class of sweepers is practically non-existent in Upper India.

I cannot do better than quote here the excellent observations made by His Excellency Lord Irwin in his reply to the address presented to him by the Madras Depressed Classes Federation on the 12th of this month. In three sentences, full of profound wisdom and sympathy, he summed up in a masterly way the greatness of Hinduism and the strength and weakness of the Hindu caste system. He said:—

"All the world knows the greatness of the Hindu religion, its power for good as a religious and a social force, its ideals of national and family life, its inspiration in art and literature, its vitality and absorbent powers. With its roots deep in the soil of antiquity, it has produced a civilization which has stood the test of time. In that civilization, barriers of caste are a recognised feature and have no doubt served a useful purpose in the various stages of its progress; but the world never stands still, and looking at the political, intellectual and economic forces by which it is to-day being moved, I cannot doubt that a tenet

which aims at debarring millions of human beings from concourse with their fellows must in the end prove a grave weakness to Hindu society."

HEROISM OF WOMEN.

Social reform, as popularly understood, is reform of evil customs and practices; but social legislation covers a much larger field and we must now enlarge the sphere of legislation in our country by including in it all measures calculated to promote the health and happiness of men and women, increase their comfort, and help the general welfare of society.

And now I appeal to the women and young men of India. I appeal to the women to prove themselves worthy daughters of the brave women of India who, in days gone by, covered the history of this country with glory. It was the women of India who made heroes of men and inspired them to perform deeds of valour which are sung in the country and are remembered and admired everywhere. Take the case of the Rajputs. The history of Rajput heroism is the history of the heroism of Rajput women. It was the Rajput women who inspired their husbands and brothers and sons to do great deeds. They not only defended their minor sons' rights with exemplary valour, but actually headed troops in their places. Read the historian Ferishta's animated picture of Durgavati, the queen of Gurrah who, like another Boadicea, headed the army and fought a desperate battle with Akbar's general Asaf Khan, in which she was wounded. Scorning flight or surviving the loss of independence, she like the antique Roman in such circumstances, slew herself on the field of battle. Remember how, on the death of the Rana of Chitor on the battlefield of Thaneshwar, his heir Karan Singh being a minor, the queen-mother Korum Devi, headed her Rajputs and gave battle in person to Qutubuddin Aibak near Amber (Jaipur), when Qutbuddin was defeated and wounded. Jawahir Bai, another

queen-mother of Chitor, in order to set an example of courageous devotion, headed a sally during the seige of that fortress by Bahadur Shah of Gujrat in which she was slain. The unparallelled heroism displayed by the mother of Fattah during the seige of Chitor by Akbar is unforgettable. Says Colonel Tod :—

"When the Saloombra fell at the gate of the Sun, the command devolved on Fattah of Kailwa. He was only sixteen. His father had fallen in the last shock, and his mother had survived but to rear the sole heir of their house. Like the Spartan mother of old, she commanded him to put on the 'saffron robe' (the robe that Rajputs put on when determined to die in a fight) and die for Chitor: but surpassing the Grecian dame, she illustrated her precept by example; and lest any soft 'compunctious visitings' for one dearer then herself might dim the lustre of Kailwa, she armed the young bride with a lance, with her descended the rock, and the defenders of Chitor saw her fall fighting by the side of her Amazonian mother. When their wives and daughters performed such deeds, the Rajputs became reckless of life."

Another instance of how Rajput women compelled the men to defend their country and die in its defence is related by the French traveller, Bernier. When Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur, after losing the battle of Fatehabad about the middle of the seventeenth century, retired with only a handful of followers to Jodhpur, his queen refused to receive him. Bernier says :—

"I cannot forbear to relate the fierce reception which the daughter of the Rana gave to her husband Jaswant Singh after his defeat and flight. When she heard he was nigh, and had understood what had passed in the battle, that he had fought with all possible courage; that he had but four or five hundred men left; and at last, no longer able to resist the enemy, had been forced to retreat; instead of sending some one to condole with him in his misfortune, she commanded in a dry mood to shut the gate of the castle, and not to let this infamous man enter; that he was not her husband;.........In a word, he was to vanquish or to die.



FORTRESS OF CHITOR

The magnificent example of woman's valour and devotion to her country so finely displayed by that immortal heroine, Queen Lakshmibai of Jhansi, during the days of the Sepoy War must ever inspire you to remain true to your ideals.

I will not tire your patience with more examples of women's courage, sense of duty and devotion to their country. The noble traditions of heroism left by your forbears should ever be kept untarnished. Let the sons and daughters you rear, be such as would uphold the honour of the country and restore to our motherland her past grandeur and glory. There was a time when in my part of the country, the ideal of motherhood was embodied in the famous line —

जननी जने तो ऐसो जन कै दाता कै सूर,

"O Mother, let thy son be either a great benefactor or a hero."

My appeal to you, young men, is to break the bonds of convention and custom. Fight against evil customs and pernicious practices. Emancipate the women. Cultivate the spirit of self-denial of the Brahman of old and become as fearless and as devoted to duty as the Rajput of medieval times. Remember also that a sound social system is the only basis for a lasting political structure to be raised on it. Forget not that an enormous amount of social work has to be done in the country. Let every young man in India work with the unshakable resolution born of the conviction which inspired William Pitt at the age of twenty-four to declare, "I know that I can save England and I know that no one else can save it." Lay to heart the sound advice of the great Goethe, and act accordingly:

Ponder well and know the right
Onward, then, with all thy might.

AWAKENING OF WOMEN[1]

Within the bond of marriage, tell me Brutus
Is it excepted I should know no secrets
That appertain to you? Am I yourself
But, as it were, in sort or limitation;
To keep with you at meals, comfort your bed
And talk to you sometimes? Dwell I but in the suburbs
Of your good pleasure? If it be no more,
Portia is Brutus' harlot, not his wife.

SHAKESPEARE, *Julius Cæsar.*

IT is a happy sign of the times that the women of India are becoming conscious of the unenviable position they occupy in the country. They are awakening to the fact that their legal status whether in domestic life or in the social economy of the country is not only incompatible with the part they are ordained by nature to play, but is unjust and destructive of their welfare. They, the mothers, the sisters, the wives, the daughters of the nation have no rights worth the name, have no legal position they may be sorry to lose, no large possessions they may be deprived of. They have no rights of inheritance, no professions to adopt, no means of leading independent lives of usefulness or happiness. As daughters they inherit no property, as wives they enjoy no freedom, as widows they can claim no rights to their husbands' estate, and society puts a ban on their re-marriage. They are the daughters of India just as much as their brothers are the sons of India; the sons have certain birth-rights, for instance, a right to share in family property, the daughters have none.

[1]From the Diwali number of the *Bombay Samachar*, 12th November 1928 A.D.

A widower may re-marry; a widow may not. Every man has the road to serve his country open to him; a woman remaining in *Purdah* has no such opportunities. She has the same blood tingling in her veins, the same wish to serve her country, the same impulse to do her duty as a patriotic daughter of the motherland. But the *Purdah* and the innumerable disabilities imposed on her are insurmountable obstacles in the way of her fulfilling her desire and prevent her from performing what she regards as her duty as much as her brother, to whom all avenues to serve his country are open. And all these disabilities, these handicaps have been imposed on her by man, partly because of his selfishness, partly because of his prejudice, and partly because of his ignorance. But whatever their origin, these disabilities and handicaps must now be removed and removed without delay in his own interest as well as in hers. Times have changed, circumstances have changed, conditions of life have so completely changed that what was calculated at one time to yield a certain result, produce a certain effect, and fit in a certain scheme of things, now not only does not produce that effect, does not yield that result, does not fit in that ancient scheme now completely out of joint, but has become a positive hindrance. When India was practically isolated from the world, when it was self-sufficing and self-contained, when it was independent, when it was not subject to foreign economic pressure, it led a life adjusted to those conditions that then obtained. But India now is open to foreign attack—social, cultural, and economic—at all points and is being exploited, and subjected to so many disabilities and drawbacks, that in the interests of women as well as in the larger interests of the country they should be emancipated and that without any delay. The necessity of this has been so clearly perceived, its urgency so fully understood that such a backward country—backward in intellectual and moral

culture, in the arts and amenities of life—as Afghanistan, is giving up *Purdah* and removing obstacles in the way of woman to enable her to pool her energy, time and work with man to serve the country and maintain its independence.

In India, too, the women are awakening to a preception of the difficulties in their way and are here and there organising themselves to demand their rights, to enable them to take their proper share in the service of the nation. It is, therefore, the duty of every man who has the good of his country at heart, to support the women movement in India. With all the strength he could command, that great man and true patriot, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, used to say that with the women in *Purdah* and under disabilities, India could never make much progress, for it was like a country bullock cart to which two bullocks had been yoked, but only one of which worked. *Purdah* must be abolished. Every girl in the country should be educated and facilities provided to enable her to lead a happy life and serve her nation. Whether the joint family system remains or disappears, she must be given her just rights as a member of the family in which she is born. If her brother has a right to re-marry, she must be given the same right, whether she chooses to exercise it or not. If she remains bound to her husband by unbreakable ties of affection and fidelity, he too must be bound by law to her by the same unbreakable ties. He must not be allowed to treat her as a chattel, as a slave or even as an inferior. If he is free to leave her, she must be equally free to leave him. As mothers, women must be loved and revered; as sisters, they must be loved and assisted; as wives they must be loved and protected; as daughters they must be loved and trained to lead useful and happy lives. It is only when this duty is fully recognised and accepted by every man in India that he will get a helpmate who will bring

him happiness and strength to overcome difficulties, conquer his enemies, and do his duty by his country. Woman is *Lakshmi* and will bring him wealth. She is *Saraswati* and will bring him learning. *Make her free and she will break man's chains. Slaves cannot produce free men, and woman enslaved will not bring forth men who would be free.* Keep her a bond-slave and you and your country will remain bond-slaves of others. If a woman could efficiently rule a kingdom as Ahalya Bai of Indore did; if a woman can be the Regent of a State as the Maharanees of Travancore and Gwalior at present are, is it right, is it just, is it expedient, is it fair that a woman should have no right to inherit property? If women are kept at the mercy of men, it follows, as the day the night, that men shall have to be at the mercy of others. Those who know something of the moral forces that imperceptibly, yet surely, regulate human affairs, those who understand the fundamental laws that govern the evolution of society and the working of the human mind and consequently the development of human institutions, fully realize that the subjection of women must ultimately result in the subjection of men.

This lesson has been well learnt by New Turkey; and the Government of Angora under that great patriot, Kamal Pasha, has abolished the *Purdah* and emancipated the women throughout the country. In ancient India, women were free. Queen Kekayi fought by the side of her husband Dashratha on the field of battle and saved his life. The Rajput women, clad in armour, sword in hand, defended the fortress of Chitor and fell alongside of their husbands and brothers on the battlements. The Rani of Jhansi, sword in hand, marched at the head of her troops and performed those deeds of valour which have covered her with imperishable glory and won for her the admiration of the British Commander-in-Chief who declared that she was

the bravest soldier on the enemy side in the Sepoy War. The day may not be far off when Indians may have to fight and if women are not free, if they are not able to do their part in the fight that is coming, woe be to the country, and dark, and hopeless will be the future of the Hindu race. To save it from the fate which overtook the Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Carthagenians, the Etruscans and other nations of antiquity who have vanished from the world leaving only names on the pages of history, Hindu women must be emancipated. History blazes forth certain truths, which wise men have learnt, which men with eyes can see, but which doomed nations and men neither see nor understand.

CHILD MARRIAGE

I*

Say not—"The struggle nought availeth
    The labour and the wounds are vain
The enemy faints not, nor falleth,
    And as things havo been, they remain,
For, while the tired waves, vainly breaking
    Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
    Comes, silent, flooding in, the main.

J. G. WHITTIER.

Sir, I rise to move that the Bill to regulate marriages of children amongst the Hindus be taken into consideration.

The primary object of the Bill is to put a stop to child-widowhood. No country in the world, except this unhappy land, presents the sorry spectacle of having in its population child-widows who, according to the customs of the country cannot remarry. Enforced widowhood is a feature peculiar to Hindu society; and when we consider that some of the victims of this pernicious—I had almost said inhuman—custom were babies eight or ten months old when they were married, Honourable Members will realise how urgent and imperative is the call for legislation in the matter.

The Bill before the House does not attempt to lay down the ages at which boys and girls should marry. For Hindus that was done by their law-giver Manu, who laid down that a girl may marry three years after she attains puberty; and Dhanwantri, the great

* Speech delivered in the Legislative Assembly at Simla on 15 September 1927.

Hindu authority on the subject, declared that ordinarily girls attained puberty in India at sixteen. The social and domestic environments of the present day have perhaps slightly lowered the age of puberty in India. Yet, according to Manu, who allows marriage three years after puberty, even at the present day the marriageable age of a girl ought not to be below sixteen years.

As it stands, my Bill does not go against the spirit or the letter of any religious behest; for no Sastras, ancient or modern, enjoin that a girl must be married before she attains puberty. And it is an admitted fact that girls do not attain puberty before they are twelve years old. Thus, while it does not come into conflict with any Sastras, the Bill removes what is probably the most oppressive burden under which Hindu womanhood is groaning. The Bill is a very modest attempt to recognise that female children even amongst Hindus have certain inalienable rights and that the State with any pretensions to civilization will deem it its duty to protect them, without heeding the vagaries that masquerade in the guise of social customs.

Sir, a reference to the last Census Report will show how important the matter of the Bill is. That Report says that there were in India in 1921 A.D. 612 Hindu widows who were babies not even 12 months old; 498 between 1 and 2 years; 1,280 between 2 and 3; 2,863 between 3 and 4; and 6,758 who were between 4 and 5 years of age, making a total of 12,016 widows under 5 years of age. The number of Hindu widows between 5 and 10 years of age was 85,580 and those between 10 and 15, 2,33,533. The total number of widows under 10 was 97,596, and under 15 was 3,31,793.[1]

[1] According to the 1931 A. D. Census (*Vide* Vol. 1, Part 11, p. 120), the figures are as follows:—

Hindu widows under	5 years	23,832
" " "	10 "	1,08,176
" " "	15 "	2,54,438

These numbers include Jain and Arya widows, for Jains and Aryas have been separately classed in the Report for political purposes; otherwise they are all Hindus and are governed by the same marriage laws. And if we include Brahmos and Sikhs who are as much Hindus as the so-called Hindus, the total number of Hindu widows under 15 was 3,32,472 in 1921 A.D.[1]

The gravity of the question will however be realised when we remember that out of every 1,000 Hindu married women 14 are under 5 years of age, 111 below 10, and 437 under 15 years of age. This means that a little over 11 per cent of the Hindu women are married, when they are below 10 years of age, *i.e.*, when they are mere children, and that nearly 44 percent of them who lead married lives when they are less than 15 years of age, *i.e.*, when they are not yet out of their teens and before they have attained true and full puberty and are yet physically quite unfit to bear the strain of maternity.

Sir, the secondary aim of the Bill is to remove the principal impediment to the physical and mental growth of the youth of both sexes and the chief cause of their premature decay and death. The measure, I propose, will help to remove the causes which lead to heavy mortality amongst Hindu married girls. The very high percentage of deaths among them is due to the fact that they are quite immature and are utterly unfit to begin married life when they actually do so. Speaking of the strain imposed on girls by married relations, Dr. Lancaster in his book "Tuberculosis in India", page 47, says:

"People forget the fearful strain upon the constitution of a delicate girl of fourteen years or less, which results from the thoughtless incontinence of the newly married boy, or still more, the pitiless incontinence of the remarried man. Serious as these causes of strain are upon the health of the young married girl,

[1] This number became 2,55,333 in 1931 A. D.

they sink into significance in comparison with the stress of maternity which follows. It is a truism to say that the process connected with reproduction which, from one point of view, may be regarded as the most important of human functions, should be allowed to take place under the most favourable conditions possible. Surely, it would seem to be of fundamental importance that these processes should be delayed until the body, as a whole, shall have attained its full development and be prepared for this great crisis. For in no other crisis of the life does the ultimate result depend so much upon the physical condition of the body."

And he pleads:

"Let even so much as two years be conceded, and in place of eighteen years which may be reckoned as the lower limiting age in ordinary cases of marriage in the West, let sixteen years be the age which popular opinion shall regard as the normal one for marriage in this country. The result will be an incalculable gain in the health of the women of India as also in that of the children whom they bear."

Sir, this is the opinion of an authority on the subject. My Bill falls far short of this aim; it is only a step towards this desideratum.

Leaving this aside—and I confess that I regard this as the most important aspect of the question—I think the Bill deserves the support even of those to whom nothing matters but the political emancipation of the country.

Sir, progress is unity. And if we are to make any advance, and the country is to come into line with, or nearly into line with the progressive countries of the West, or is to become free from their domination, a programme of social reform of a thoroughgoing character, of which the abolition of child marriage will be the principal item, must be taken in hand along with the pursuit of political reform. Much of this social reform is no doubt the domestic or private concern of the people of the country and does not call for legislation. I believe, Sir, that just as the veil, with all that it connotes, has disappeared in the greater part of Turkey and is fast

disappearing from the rest of it, so must the *purdah*, the *chauka*, child marriage, enforced widowhood, the ban on inter-dining and inter-marriage, caste in its present rigid and ossified form, and untouchability disappear from India, if we are to be in a position to hold our own in the international conflict of interests, the clash of colour, and the struggle for life that are raging furiously in the world. For, we must remember, that even political emancipation, freedom or Swaraj, by whatever name you call that fact, droppeth not like sweet manna from Heaven. It has to be won. It has to be wrested from unwilling hands; and so long as these evils exist in this country, we will neither have the strength of arm nor the strength of character to win freedom. Once these evils are gone, a spirit will arise in the land which no power on earth will be able to quench; a strength of arm to fight for freedom will be developed, which the might of the mightiest will not be able to resist. I am sure, Sir, that as the day follows the night, so will these evils disappear, and disappear soon. But there are certain matters of a serious nature in which considerations of humanity and the inalienable rights of a human being—and that human being, the innocent and helpless child—call for the immediate intervention of the Legislature. The present Bill, Sir, concerns one of those matters. In order to protect the inalienable rights of the innocent children and to concede to them the right to live their lives, it is necessary that infant marriages and child marriages must come to an end at once and boys and girls grow up unfettered by marital ties and unburdened with family cares, which have not only immensely accelerated the death rate amongst the young married people, especially girls, but have dangerously lowered the vitality of the people, stunted their growth, and barred their way to prosperity and happiness.

Sir, I will say one word more as to the utility of

the measure I propose for enactment. The Bill, if passed, will give a real and effective protection to girls, which the Age of Consent Act *does not* do. That law is a sort of flank attack on the social and physical evil, I might say the crime, of child marriage. The law of the Age of Consent, so far as marital relations are concerned, is a dead letter, and has done little practical good except the slight educative effect which it has had on certain classes of people. The law regarding the Age of Consent has been in existence a pretty long time, yet the last Census Report says:

"There is little evidence in the Census figures to suggest that the practice of infant marriage is dying out."

How long, Sir, shall we then allow this canker to eat into the vitals of our race? Shall we stand by and see the race sink below the point when regeneration and resuscitation become impossible?

I have a word to say to Government as to their attitude towards this Bill. A heavy responsibility rests on them for the continuance of this evil. Government probably know that several Indian States, for instance, Baroda, Mysore and Bharatpur, have passed laws forbidding marriages of girls below twelve. Recently the Kotah State (Rajputana) promulgated a new Marriage Act with effect from 1st July 1927, prohibiting marriages of girls under twelve and boys under sixteen, as also of girls under eighteen with men above double their age, and of unmarried girls over eighteen with men over fourty-five. Even China has passed a law forbidding marriages of girls below sixteen and boys below eighteen. Sir, this shows what attitude Governments really interested in and solicitous of the welfare of their people, are taking in regard to child marriage, and the duty of the Government of India lies clear before them.

I was taken aback when at the introduction of my Bill, the Honourable the late Home Member declared

that he would oppose its pssing, but that he did not desire to break the convention that Bills should not be opposed at the introduction stage. That, Sir, was a surprise to me. For, had not this very Government, through its Home Secretary, expressed its sympathy, though in an apologetic tone, with the measure in 1921 A.D.? I read from the Debates of the Legislative Assembly for the 17th February, 1921:

"Q. No. 123 Lala Girdhari lal: Do Government intend to undertake legislation forbidding marriage of girls before the age of 11 and that of boys before 14?

Mr. S. P. O. 'Donnell. The answer is in the negative. Government consider that under the present conditions, in a matter of this kind which intimately concerns the social customs and religious beliefs of the people, it is preferable that the initiative should be taken by non-officials rather than the Government.

Does this not show by clear implication that in 1921 the attitude of Government towards the question was one of sympathy, and by no means one of opposition? Sir, it was a surprise to me, as it was to most people, to see that a Government which professes to work for the good of the people, a Government that is representative of a nation that certainly is one of the most advanced in the world in wisdom and in the development of justice and freedom, and claims—and I think rightly— that it has great respect for womanhood should take up such an attitude, and instead of welcoming and promising to support such essentially necessary legislation for children and helpless girls, declare its intention to oppose it. Sir, if Governmet had said that they had in their hands unimpeachable and overwhelming evidence that the bulk of Hindu public opinion was dead against the measure, and that therefore they could not support it, we could understand their position. The attitude of the late Home Member has been condemned in the country and constructions have been put upon it which, though I

think they are unjustifiable, Government would do well to prove to be groundless by taking up a helpful attitude towards this Bill. For, after all, the Government, like the humblest of men, would be judged by its acts and not by its professions. Take this month's number of the *Modern Review*, the premier magazine in the country. In an article entitled "Indian Social Reformers, etc." the editor, Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, says :

"The abolition of child marriage and child mortality and the raising of the Age of Consent within and outside marital relations would tend to make Indians a physically, intellectually and morally a fitter nation. But British bureaucrats have all along been very unwilling to help Indian social reformers in effecting these reforms by direct and indirect legislation. They had no objection to abolish Suttee, probably because it was mainly a question of humanity;—the abolition of Suttee was not expected to promote the building up of a stalwart nation. But the abolition of child marriage, etc., is indirectly and almost directly a political as well as a social remedy. So, in these matters our British bureaucratic friends fall back upon the cant of neutrality and non-interference in religious and socio-religious matters. As if Suttee, hook swinging, etc., were not such things, which the British Government have stopped by legislation......".

He adds :

"And this mentality continues, in spite of the following admission made in the Census Report of India for 1901 A. D. (Vol. I., page 434).

'Happily there is reason to believe that the leaders of Indian society are fully alive to the disastrous consequences, both to the individual and to the race which arise from premature cohabitation and are anxious to use their influence to defer the commencement of conjugal life until the wife has attained the full measure of physical maturity requisite to fit her for child bearing'."

The editor further adds :

"Twenty-six years have passed since this was written, yet the late Home Member of the Government of India declared

that he would oppose Mr. Har Bilas Sarda's very modest Hindu Child Marriage Bill. It has to be seen whether his successor will carry out the threat."

Though I, for one, do not believe that British officers in India are inspired by such unworthy motives as are ascribed to them, in their attitude towards legislation such as that on the anvil, still it is my earnest hope that Government would reconsider their attitude towards this question of child widowhood—the tragedy of child widowhood as the *Pioneer* in its issue of the 9th of this month calls it. I would beg the Honourable the Home Member not to say or do anything which would give the social reformers and workers in the country and the public generally, plausible ground to charge Government with hostility, based on political considerations, to all measures calculated to remedy social and physical evils which are a disgrace to all concerned and which effectually bar their way to physical or social welfare.

Another danger lies before Government, which a book and a speech in England have brought to light. Let Government not furnish an excuse to its critics to suspect it of helping to perpetuate conditions which the base traducers of fallen and subject nations gladly make use of. Just as there are slimy creatures who burrow in dirt, eat dirt and throw out dirt, so are there persons like that notorious writer of *Mother India*, whose attempt to revile the "mother" has earned for her the contempt of all sensible people. While she will for a time enjoy the ill-repute of a defamer of a nation, to future students of Indian constitutional history she will appear as one of those contemptible characters, who lend themselves to become tools in the hands of scheming opponents of a nation's aspirations.

Sir, there are people who think, whether rightly or wrongly, that Government, who is the

guardian of India's interests, does India an injury by conniving at the continued existence of child-widowhood in the country; for, the existence of this evil makes it possible for a Mr. Pilcher to utter base lies and vile calumnies against a suffering class of women whose high character and saintly lives amidst sufferings nobly borne, ought to put to shame those whose vile outpourings in no way enhance the dignity, the prestige, or the glory of the English race.

Sir, Providence, as a just retribution for the woes and sufferings to which our passive acquiescence in the continuance of an evil custom subjects the child widows of this country, has condemned us to centuries of political servitude and national impotence, when in our utter helplessness we have silently to suffer the outrageous insults heaped on our womanhood. Sir, when an insult was offered to the Queen of France, the great Burke in a memorable outburst of impassioned and noble eloquence exclaimed that the age of chivalry had passed, or ten thousand swords would have leapt from their scabbards to avenge that insult.

How fallen are we, and not we alone—pardon my saying so,—but also those who having inherited the noble traditions of the English race and being custodians of the honour, the good name and the reputation of this country, allow without a protest the womanhood of India to be so basely traduced and grossly insulted—insulted in a manner which has moved at least one Englishman, a true missionary of Christ, to do public penance in Calcutta for the great crime of a countryman of his.

Sir, if Government have no desire or have not the courage to initiate and carry through legislation prohibiting marriages of girls below twelve years of age, they might very well give at least this private measure their hearty support. But even if the Honourable the Home Member is not disposed to do this, as we think

the representative of the *Mā Bāp* Government, possessing a genuine solicitude for the welfare of the people ought to do, he will at least take up an attitude of neutrality, release Government members from the mandate handicap and permit them to vote according to their conscience; or, let the fate of the Bill be decided by the vote of the Indian members of this House who are principally affected by it.

I hope Government have noted that all the amendments so far proposed by Honourable Members not only support the Bill, but are directed towards making the provisions of the Bill go much further than I have ventured to do.

Sir, with your permission, I will read the report published in the *Times of India* of the 24th June 1926, of a heart-rending incident, the direct result of a child marriage!

"The sad story of how a young married Mahratta girl, eleven years old, named Bhingoobai, drowned herself in a well at Narayanpet Road Station, on the G. I. P. Railway between Raichur and Wadi, while being sent back by her father to her husband at Shahabad has reached here.

The driver on 16 passenger train stated that while examining his engine near the water tank at Narayanpet Station, he noticed a girl get down from the third class bogie carriage and running to the station well to jump into it.

The father of the girl told the police that his daughter Bhingoobai had been married to one Luxman, four years back when she was about six years old. In accordance with custom, she was sent to her husband's house two months after marriage. After remaining there two months, she returned to her parent's house, was sent back by the latter, but returned again.

This happened several times. Her father talking advantage of one of his relations named Yedoo going to Shahabad determined to send his daughter back to her husband with this relation and himself took her to the station and saw her entrained. While he and Yedoo were engaged in conversation on the

platform he was informed his daughter had fallen in a well. He ran to the well with others and a cultivator, named Samboo, jumped into the well and brought the girl out still alive but senseless. She expired soon after."

This is not a solitary incident of its kind in this country. I have personal knowledge of one or two similar sad things. Do Government with full knowledge of such happenings still feel that they are justified in opposing, or by proposing dilatory proceedings, in postponing the fruition of the labours of people who are endeavouring to alleviate the lot of innocent, defenceless girls who are done to death by an ignorant, heartless custom, or a mischievously false notion of social decorum ?

Before I resume my seat, I respectfully and with all the earnestness that I can command, invite the attention of Honourable Members on both sides of the House to the touching appeal of Mahatma Gandhi made at Madras on the 7th September 1927, for the abolition of child-widowhood. He said that there was no warrant for this kind of widowhood in Hinduism; and he exclaimed with intense grief and agony of mental pain, " I have often said in secret to God; If you want me to live, Oh God, why do you make me a witness to these tragedies ?"



MAHATMA GANDHI

CHILD MARRIAGE

II*

Custom, 'tis true, a venerable tyrant,
O'er servile man extends her blind dominion.

THOMSON, *Tancred and Sigismunda.*

I move that the Bill to Regulate Marriages of Children amongst the Hindus, as reported by the Select Committee, be taken into consideration.

As this House clearly expressed itself in favour of passing legislation in the matter of child marriage, and as the Honourable the Home Member speaking on behalf of Government last year, stated that the Bill had the cordial support of Government, I will not say anything regarding the policy of legislating on the question, except what a great English writer has said that, where large communities are concerned, legislation is the only effective means of accomplishing social reform. Honourable Members who read their daily papers are well aware that almost all public bodies in India are taking great interest in Social Reform; and almost every All-India Caste Conference, and the Indian National Social Conference that holds its Session every year unanimously demand the enactment of this measure.

This Bill has been circulated to the public and opinions have been received. Before I come to the opinions received by Government as a result of the

*Speech delivered on 29th January 1929 A. D. in the Legislative Assembly, New Delhi.

circulation of the Bill, I must invite the attention of this House to the remarkably unanimous opinion of the party chiefly concerned in marriage, in full support of the Bill. Marriage affects the life of a woman more vitally and in a much fuller manner than that of a man. The reasons are many and obvious. One obvious reason is that marriage not only completely deflects her whole future course of life, but removes her completely from the scene of her premarried life. Not so with man. And then it is she who has to bear the burden of maternity. Society and the State should, therefore, attach much greater weight to her views and her considered opinion in the matter of marriage. Now, what is the attitude of women towards this Bill which is of such paramount importance to them ? Hundreds of ladies' meetings have been held in the country; District and Provincial Ladies' conferences have taken place, Ladies Associations and Sabhas representing different communities have met and passed resolutions on this Bill. Three All-India Ladies' Conferences in different parts of the country have met, discussed and passed resolutions in the matter. But do you find a single instance of such a public meeting of women protesting against the Bill? With a unanimity which is remarkable, almost astonishing, women all over the country have demanded that this Bill be passed and passed without delay. Even the Rajputana Provincial Ladies' Conference, composed in a preponderating degree of Marwari women, which met on the 19th November 1928, emphatically demanded the immediate passing of this Bill. We thus find that half the number of people affected by marriage, and that half, considering the interests at stake, the more important and as is justly said, the better half, wholeheartedly supports the Bill. But this is not all. By far the major part of the opinion consulted by Government also welcomes and supports this Bill. Counting the printed opinions

circulated by Government, we find that, leaving out of account the report of a Local Government saying that thirty-nine persons were consulted and the majority were against the Bill; leaving also out of account the report of another Local Government that all the officials and non-officials consulted were in favour of the Bill without giving numbers; and taking into account the printed opinions which include ten out of the thirty-nine mentioned above, and also all reports where numbers for and against are given, and leaving out Madras, opinions from which province are separately analysed, we find that, out of a total of 167 opinions recorded, 128 are in favour of the Bill. Of the opinions received, only eighteen are for lowering the marriageable age of girls to twelve; and of these eighteen, two do not insist on such lowering. Five ask for thirteen, while three ask for sixteen, and one for eighteen, while the Madras Legislative Council unanimously demand sixteen years for girls. As for boys, four people want sixteen (two of these being Europeans) and one wants fifteen.

As regards Madras, where it seems that special care has been taken to collect opinions and from which province alone 87 opinions have come against 167 from the rest of India, we find it repeatedly stated that, except the Brahmin community which forms only about three per cent. of the population of that Presidency, the remaining 97 per cent. support the Bill. The women of Madras, as is clear from the womens' meetings held all over the Presidency, support it. Even among the Brahmins there are two parties, one, which contains a very large number of Brahmins, and perhaps the majority, and is not dominated by the priests, supports the Bill; the other which has vested interests and is, therfore, very vocal, and which contains some who honestly believe that Brahmins are enjoined to marry their daughters before they attain puberty, oppose it. The fact that the majority even of the

Brahmins of Madras is in favour of the Bill is clear from the report of Mr. Williams, who says:

"I have received the opinions of twenty-two persons of standing in Berhampur. Of these twenty-two, thirteen are Brahmins and nine non-Brahmins. Of these sixteen support the Bill. Of the sixteen, ten are Brahmins. Thus, of the thirteen Brahmins consulted, ten support the Bill and only three oppose it."

The Sub-Collector of Kumbakonam says:

"At a meeting of the ladies of Kumbakonam town,"—which is a seat of Brahmins—"the Bill was unanimously supported."

Mr. Upendra Poi Avergal, District Magistrate, South Arcot, says:

"If the law is passed, I do not think that there would be serious discontent. The action of the Native States may serve as a precedent and guide in this case."

Mrs. Gomathi Ammal, speaking for the Women's Indian Association, Veerargaupuram, says that:

"The Child Marriage Bill has not come a minute earlier and cannot be postponed for a minute later. Child marriages must be prevented."

Mrs. Lakhshmi Ekambaram for the Ladies' Association, Tuticorin, warmly supports the Bill. The Hindu Patit Pavan Mission, Ganjam; and the Hindu Dharm Paripalan Sabha; the Madras League of Youth and the Indian Womens' Association in Madras whole-heartedly support the Bill. Only one Municipal Council in that Presidency was consulted, that of Guntur, and it has supported the Bill.

Out of the eighty-seven opinions submitted to the Government of India from the Madras Presidency, fifty-eight support the Bill, only fourteen are against it, and the rest are either neutral, or express no definite opinion. Twelve opinions favour twelve years for girls, one favours thirteen, four want sixteen, one eighteen, one twenty, and the rest approve of fourteen.

If we take the opinions of the different Local Governments in India, we find that the Governors of Bombay, Burma, Bihar and Orissa, the United Provinces, the Punjab, and the Central Provinces, as well as the Chief Commissioners of Coorg, of Ajmer-Merwara and of the North-West Frontier Province support the Bill. The Governor of Bengal is for dropping it, while the Governor of Assam and the Chief Commissioners of Delhi and Baluchistan express no opinion on it. The Governor of the United Provinces records that he regards " the objects of this Bill as of the first importance for the social and physical well-being of the country as a whole."

Turning to the opinions of the High Courts, we see that the Punjab High Court strongly support the Bill. The Chief Justice and four Judges of the Bombay High Court support the Bill, the remaining expressing no opinion. As for the United Provinces, the Chief Justice and six Judges support the Bill, and two others say that they do not oppose it. The Chief Justice and four Judges of the Bihar and Orissa High Court support the Bill, while three (two Europeans and one Indian) oppose it. The Burma Government say that the Burma High Court " apparently accept the principle of the Bill, " but consider that the draft Bill is so weak that it would prove a dead letter. The Calcutta High Court express no opinion. The Madras High Court have, since the last session of the Legislative Assembly, expressed their opinion; and a majority of the Judges opposes the Bill on the ground that it interferes with the religion of the people. This is not surprising coming, as it does, from a province where untouchability flourishes and where the Courts long hesitated to allow all people to use public roads.

As for Judicial Commissioners, all the four Judicial and the Additional Judicial Commissioner of Sind fully support the Bill, as also the Judicial Commissioner of

Ajmer-Merwara. Two of the four Judges of the Oudh Chief Court support it: one opposes it and one says that the Bill may be made applicable to Hindus only. The Judicial Commissioners of the Central Provinces, Baluchistan, and the North-West Frontier Province express no opinion. The above analysis shows that by far the great majority, a preponderating majority, even of those consulted by Government, support the Bill, and the clauses regarding the minimum marriageable ages laid down in it.

But a complete and crushing answer to those who say that there is considerable opposition to the Bill in Madras is furnished by the Resolution unanimously passed by the Madras Legislative Council, without a single dissentient voice. The Resolution reads:

"This Council recommends to the Government that they may be pleased to communicate to the Government of India that, in the opinion of this Council, legislation raising the marriageable age of boys and girls to at least twenty-one and sixteen years respectively is necessary",

The Madras Legislative Council contains representatives elected by all the towns and districts in that Presidency and a number of eminent Brahmins are members of it. And if there is any body which may be said truly to represent the public opinion of Madras, it is the Madras Legislative Council. This Council not only unanimously supports the Bill but goes beyond it.

Over and above all this, the proceedings of the Age of Consent Committee furnish the most complete and convincing evidence that the entire country wants this Bill to be passed at once. Day after day, witness after witness, appears before the Committee and demands that the first thing to do is to fix the marriageable age of girls at fourteen or sixteen. No better index of public opinion in the matter could possibly be found than that furnished by the evidence tendered before the Age of Consent Committee in every part of

this country. That evidence almost unanimously demands this Bill to be passed. Several women witnesses have appeared before this Committee and every one of them has asked that the Bill be passed.

With your permission, I will give you two samples of opinions of the opponents of the Bill to show to what straits they were reduced to find arguments to oppose the Bill. One is that of an Indian, the other that of an Englishman. The Indian is Mr. Deoskar, whose logical mind may be gauged by his statement;

"The average longevity in India is much below that in European countries, and therefore the age for marriages and other important events in life should also be similarly lower, for there would otherwise be the calamity of children being born late in life and parents dying with very young children behind them."

The dicta of the European opponent, who is Mr. Ferrers, Sessions Judge, Dharwar, are interesting reading. Giving his opinion on the Protection of Children Bill, he says:

"I am wholly opposed to all legislation of this type. Every Hindu family is a little independent commonwealth. *Self government is its birthright* This birthright is now being stolen by *external invaders.* The intention of such an usurper may be in the highest degree benevolent. But *there is no usurpation so dangerous* as that which is undertaken with a benevolent intention."

I wonder, if Mr. Ferrer can realise the significance and the full implications of the dicta he has laid down.

As regards the marriageable age of girls, Sir, I would with your permission and with all respect to my orthodox friends, say a word with regard to a *sloka* which is always cited in Upper India as an authority for child marriage. It is from a book called *Sheeghra Bodh* which may be roughly translated as "Royal Road to Knowledge" and which is not more than two

centuries old. The *sloka* runs as follows:

Ashta varshā bhavet gaurī,
Nava varshā cha rohiṇī,
Daśa varshā bhavet kanyā, etc., etc.,

It means that a girl is a *Gauri* at eight, a *Rohiṇī* at nine, and becomes a *Kanyā* at ten. And then menstruation ensues. If after that, she is not married, her father and mother go to hell. Now, Sir, no *Śruti*, *Smṛiti* or law books of the Hindus, none of the *Darsanas*, nor any of the recognised *Śastras* classify or describe girls as *Gaurī*, *Rohiṇī*, etc., according to their ages. It is only the *Vām Mārga*, a sect of the Hindus which worships girls, that has in its ritual called *Tantra*, given separate names to girls of one, two three, and so on, up to sixteen years old respectively. The *Rudra Yāmal Tantra* and the *Vishvasāra Tantra*, which I hold in my hands, do so. The *Rudra Yāmala Tantra* says:

"*Eka varshā bhavet sandhyā*
Dwi varshā cha saraswatī
Tri varshā cha tridhā murtī
Chatur varshātu kālikā."

The *Vishvasār* says:

"*Ashta varshātusā kanyā bhavet gaurī varaṇane*
Nava varshā rohini sā dash varshā tu kanyakā."

But even this *Vishvasar Tantra* demands and enjoins on its votaries that girls should be kept virgins up to sixteen and that every possible precaution should be taken that girls remain virgins till they attain the age of sixteen. It says:

"*Tasmat shodasha paryantam*
Yuvatīti prachakshate
Rakshitavyā prayatnena
Pakshatastah."

Now, these *Tantras* are not accepted Hindu *Śastras*; but even the *Vishvasār Tantra*, as I have said, enjoins that the girls should not be married before they attain the age of sixteen.

As for the parents who marry their girls after ten being sent to the place where the hero of Milton's great epic reigns, let me quote the opinion of Mrs. Bhagirathi Ammal of Madras, who says :

> "While the hell to which the parents go is an imaginary one, what about the *Karma* or the sending of their girls now to a living hell by selling them to old widowers who cannot get women of their own age because of this pernicious custom of child marriage."

Sir, the women of India do not talk of *Śastras*; they do not bother themselves about the effect of marriage on their prospects in the next world. They are practical and think of this world, and they want that their sufferings in this world should come to an end.

But the futility of it all in practice is clear from the one potent fact which could not be denied or ignored. The opponents of the Bill say that no legislation is necessary, as the marriage age is rising under the pressure of public opinion, and that in a few years, there will be no marriage of girls below fourteen. What becomes then, of the supposed *Śastric* injunction not to keep girls unmarried after ten ? It is a well-known fact that among the Rajas, Thakurs and Rajputs generally, girls are married after they are sixteen years old. These very pandits and *purohits* who cite the *śloka*, "*Ashta varsha bhavet gauri*," fall upon one another to go and conduct those marriages among the Rajputs. Do these priestly gentlemen go and conduct ceremonies to assist in sending the parents of the girls to where Satan reigns ? And where were the supporters of child marriages when the Maharajas of Kashmir, Bharatpur, Alwar, Baroda, Rajkot, Mandi, and others prohibited by law child marriages in their territories.

What I wish, however, to submit to this august Assembly is that this Bill is not merely a measure of social reform. With great deference to those who differ from me, I say that I regard child marriage as a *crime*, a crime against helpless boys and girls. And it does not cease to be a crime because it is done in the name of religion, or because the doers of it are not ill-disposed towards the victims. Recently a father and a son in the Madras Presidency murdered a barber boy, as a religious act to propitiate a goddess. The act was done in the name of religion, and the perpetrators bore no personal enmity to the victim. All the same, it was a crime and the Government and the public took it as a crime and a prosecution was launched. **Child marriage is a grave crime**, for, while it leads to child widowhood, it sometimes leads to the death of girl victims at the first child birth. It sends many to a slow lingering death, and as a rule, it ruins the young girl mothers physically for life. Speaking of the effect of child marriage on girls, Dr. Campbell, Principal of the Lady Hardinge College, Delhi, giving evidence before the Age of Consent Committee on the 10th October, 1928, described how girls were condemned to slow deaths by becoming mothers when quite immature. She said:

"She had attended more than one thousand Hindu girls for child births at the ages of from twelve to sixteen years. And the evil effects seen in them and in others under observation or treatment as a result of early child bearing could be hardly exaggerated. Tuberculosis was very often developed during pregnancy or lactation as the resistance of the tissues was lowered by the strain, unnatural at so early an age. This is the reason why tuberculosis was much more common in girls than in boys. About 40 per cent. of the children of girl mothers died in the first year and those who survived were weaklings."

Is child marriage then not a crime? Questioned by Mr. Kanhyalal, Dr. Campbell said that there was no other

way *to check early consummation but by fixing the marriageable age of girls at 16*. The object of this Bill, Sir, is to put a stop to this crime and to that other fearful crime, *viz.*, that of making virgin child widows, who, according to the customs of the country, cannot re-marry and are condemned to a life of suffering and misery.

Let us look a little more closely into the demand that if a man considers it his religious obligation to do a thing, the State has no right to interfere with him in his performance of it. Now, this proposition cannot be accepted or allowed to pass unchallenged. We cannot admit that a man has a right to do a thing because he regards it his religious duty to do it. If a man does a thing in the name of religion and if no one else is, in the slightest degree, adversely affected by that act, he may have some semblance of a claim to do it, though even then, sometimes he cannot be granted the liberty to do it. If a man offers himself as a sacrifice to some deity as an act of religious obligation, will the Government concede to him the liberty to commit suicide and not make that act penal ? Much more so, when he claims non-interference in doing an act in the name of religion which inflicts suffering upon others. What enlightened State in the world in the Twentieth century will concede to any one the right to do a thing in the name of religion when the doing of that thing injures another human being or inflicts suffering on him or her ? If a man regards it his religious obligation to sacrifice his child to a deity to attain salvation, will any one in his senses concede to that man the right to perpetrate that act ? Will any man in the same way, be given the right, in order to save himself from going to hell, or the fancied fear of going to hell, the right, the liberty, to condemn any other human being to a life of suffering or, as Mrs. Bhagirthi Ammal puts it, to a living hell here in this world ? Sir, readers of

history know well what oppression, what tyranny has been practised in the name of liberty; and readers of history also know what inhuman crimes have been committed in the name of religion. Remember Galilio, Bruno, Latimer, Ridley. It is time we gave up invoking religion to cover the heinousness of some of our acts. Sir, if some of the Honourable Members who, when unable to defend acts on their merits, take shelter behind religion, were to read some of the heart-rendering letters, exposing the lacerated hearts of the writers, which I have received from unknown young women from different places in India, they would not be so ready to demand the perpetuation of this inhuman custom, and would not consent to be parties to ruining so many innocent lives. They would not support the continuance of this evil practice, the sin of which more than anything else has, according to my conviction, led this sacred country of ours to a depth of degradation and a state of slavery from which we find it so difficult to extricate her. I humbly submit to Honourable Members, for Heaven's sake do not degrade our sacred religion—the noblest heritage of our race—by making it responsible for the great evils that exist in our society.

A grave responsibility rests on this House in the matter. People in England and America are watching how we deal with this Bill. Writers like Miss Mayo, and politicians like Mr. Winston Churchill have declared that India cannot be granted self-government so long as she tolerates and commits acts of oppression against girls of tender age. Thoughtful people in England and America want to know if, after 170 years of English rule, that Government will still tolerate and, by its attitude, encourage the crime of compelling helpless girls of eleven and twelve to submit to the tortures of maternity, which makes most of them wrecks for life and sends many to an early

grave. Does any one doubt for a moment that if there were women members in this House, this Bill would not have taken three months to pass into law instead of three years. I even hold in my hand a letter received from Mrs. Anusuvaben Kale, a lady Member of the Central Provinces Legislative Council. She says that she moved yesterday in the Central Provinces Legislative Council the following Resolution which was unanimously passed:

"This Council recommends to the Government to convey to the Government of India its considered opinion that the legal age of marriage for girls should be raised to fourteen and for boys to eighteen, and as a step towards this end it supports Rai Sahib Har Bilas Sarda's Child Marriage Bill as amended by the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly."

Both the Legislative Councils of Madras and the Central Provinces, where they have women members, have passed resolutions demanding the passing of this Bill, and even going beyond it.

The world is watching if the Members of this House possess the necessary self-restraint, the capacity and the liberal-mindedness to appreciate the rights of those who are at their mercy, who have been suffering oppression for a long time, whose true welfare is being trampled under foot in order to enable men to pander to their self-conceit and maintain their false notions of social decorum and fancied religious obligations. My earnest request is that we must no longer refuse to remedy the wrong inflicted on the helpless, hapless, hopeless women of India. If you refuse to remedy the wrong inflicted on them, people might well ask, what right have you to demand that justice should be done to you by a foreign power ruling over the country.

Leaving aside for the moment the graver aspect of this question, and taking into consideration its character as a piece of social legislation, we must remember that

progress is unity. No nation can live politically in the twentieth century and socially in the tenth or eleventh. Independent Asiatic nations like Turkey, in order to strengthen and stabilize their position in the hierarchy of nations, in order to keep pace with the advanced peoples and in order to be able to hold their own and not go down in the vast and world-wide struggle for existence, are taking all possible means to reform society to suit modern conditions, uproot old evil customs, cast off all outworn, antidiluvian notions, and to come abreast of the modern nations of Europe and America. We cannot keep the women of India ignorant and helpless and slaves and yet ourselves become free. The greatest of the Americans, Abraham Lincoln, gave utterance to an eternal truth when he said "A nation cannot be half free and half slave." Let us, therefore, no longer tolerate this crime of infant and child marriage, no longer compel girls who have not yet entered their teens to become mothers and thus become wrecks for life.

In all humility, and with all the earnestness I can command, and with due respect to the susceptibilities of the Honourable Members of this House, I appeal to them—to those whom God has granted the privilege of sitting on the Treasury Benches of this great and ancient country as well as those who sit on the Opposition or the neutral benches, and have come here to serve their country, not to forget the sublime teaching contained in those lines of matchless perfection of the English poet, who says:

"Hear Ye Senates, hear this truth sublime,
He who allows oppression shares the crime."



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, NEW DELHI, 1933 A D.

CHILD MARRIAGE

III*

Such dupes are men to custom, and so prone
To rev'rence what is ancient, and can plead
A course of long observance for its use,
That even servitude, the worst of ills,
Because deliver'd down from sire to son,
Is kept and guarded as a sacred thing.

COWPER, *Task.*

SIR, the Vedas inculcate adult marriage. Dr. Moonje has stated that the Śastras in different times prescribed twelve, fourteen and sixteen years as the marriageable age for girls. He has divided India into two parts, Southern and Northern India, and by some manipulation of medical topography,—because he is a doctor—he has included Bengal in Southern India. Now, as regards the Madras Presidency, opinions which the Government have received clearly show that the Madras Presidency is in favour of the Bill. Ninety-seven per cent of the people of that Presidency are non-Brahmins, and they unanimously support the Bill. Of the remaining three per cent the opinions show that a majority of them are also in favour of the Bill. I will give you one instance. Mr. Williams, Joint Magistrate at Guntur, says that he consulted twenty-two respectable people of the district of whom thirteen were Brahmins. Of the thirteen, only three were against the Bill, and ten were in favour of it. Sir, I receive telegrams

*Speech delivered in the Legislative Assembly, Simla, on 23 September 1929.

everyday from every part of the Madras Presidency demanding that the Bill be passed at once. I will refer to only one of them. It is about a meeting promoted by Sir Sivaswami Aiyer and Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar. Both these Brahmin gentlemen are well known to Members of this House. The public meeting was held under the presidency of Sir Sivaswami Aiyer and a resolution was adopted that the Bill should be passed at once. The telegram to me says that this meeting was attended by many orthodox Brahmins. It reads:

"To-day's public meeting presided over by Sir P.S. Sivaswami Aiyer and led by Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar, the Honourable V. Ramdas, T. R. Venkatrama Sastri and other Brahmin orthodox leaders have accorded its whole-hearted support to the policy and principles of the Child Marriage Bill."

But the complete and crushing answer to the opponents' objection is the fact that the Madras Legislative Council has unanimously passed the following Resolution:

"This Council recommends to Government that it may be pleased to communicate to the Government of India that, in the opinion of this Council, legislation raising the marriageable age of boys and girls to at least twentyone and sixteen respectively, is necessary."

There was not one single dissentient voice, though many eminent Brahmins are Members of the Council.

As regards Bengal, much has been made of the fact that the Provincial Hindu Conference at Dacca did not accord its support to this Bill. Those who are acquainted with the circumstances of that Conference know the peculiar condition in which that was done. But here is the opinion of the Bengal Provincial Hindu Sabha. The Secretary of the Provincial Bengal Hindu Sabha wires:

"Bengal Provincial Hindu Sabha in general meeting unanimously passed resolution supporting Sarda Bill."

And my Honourable friend Dr. Moonje, the President of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, will not disown the Bengal Provincial Hindu Sabha. The telegrams which I have been receiving every day, almost every hour, during the last few days say that meetings have been held in different towns of Bengal and many of them by ladies in Eastern Bengal, all unanimously demanding that the Bill should be passed, and stating that those who say that East Bengal does not want the Bill, do not represent the opinion of that province. (Hear, hear.) I have received telegrams from almost every part of India, asking when the Bill is going to be passed. They show that the people in the different parts of India are anxiously waiting to see that the Bill is passed.

Sir, I come now to the charge brought against me by my Honourable friend Mr. Kelkar. Speaking on the amendment of the Honourable Pandit Nilakantha Das for making exemptions in cases involving hardship, he said :

"That first point is this that this was an idea originally embodied in Mr. Sarda's own Bill when it was first introduced. I do not think he will deny it, if I put it to him. The Honourable Member unfortunately is in the hands of the Select Committee. If he has convictions of his own, he will stand up and say, 'I accept this amendment, whatever the fate of other amendments.' I cannot sympathise with him over this matter when he is going against his own convictions by not supporting this amendment."

My answer to my Honourable friend is : I deny that this idea as supposed by Mr. Kelkar was embodied in the original Bill. I deny that I am going against my convictions. My Honourable friend was not right in saying that, if I had any convictions of my own, I would have accepted the amendment. There is no connection whatever between the amendment proposed by the Honourable Pandit Nilakantha Das and the

provision which I had made in clause 6 of my Bill. That clause, Sir, provided for the conscientious objector, when the objection was founded on religious tenets. The amendment supported by Mr. Kelkar has nothing to do with the "conscientious objector." It provides for cases in which the guardian of a girl is alleged to feel compelled to solemnise a marriage, the non-performance of which would involve a hardship to the girl or her family. Hardship to the girl or to the family, for instance, the illness of a guardian or the lack of means, is certainly not the same thing as a conscientious objection. I am sure, Sir, that had it not been for the annoyance caused to my Honourable friend by the House summarily rejecting all his amendments, or had he had the provision of my Bill before him at the time he was speaking, he would not have been unfair to me. His chagrin is further shewn by his complaint, Sir, that Government gave me for this Bill several days which were reserved for official business and that this was a very peculiar thing and was not warranted. The Honourable Member will perhaps remember that when during the last Session, Government voted for the postponement of this Bill, they promised the House that in the autumn Simla Session they would *provide sufficient time* for the passing of this Bill and would place at the disposal of the House as many days as may be found necessary in order that this Bill be passed. No one can therefore complain that Government, in fulfilment of that promise, are giving all the facilities necessary for the passing of this Bill.

A word, with regard to what fell from the Honourable Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. Sir, he is the Leader of the Party to which I belong. I have the highest respect for him, as I am sure everybody else in the House has, for his high sense of duty and sincerity of purpose, his undoubted patriotism, and for the great services he has rendered to this country. It

gives me pain to differ from him. It was a little disappointing to see him use in support of a dilatory motion, all those great oratorical gifts with which God has endowed him. Only the other day, in mellifluous accents, in those soft, persuasive tones, so characteristic of him and which we all admire, he moved for lowering the marriageable age of girls. Much as I should like to follow him, Sir, *I feel that more powerful than his eloquence are the tears of the child widows, the woes of the child wives, the sufferings of the victims of this evil custom that call for justice and that beckon us to the path where lies our duty to the women of our country, our motherland.* It is, however, a matter of some satisfaction that I do not differ from him in this Bill on any important matter of principle. He supports the Bill; he does not want that the Bill should be wrecked, he wants that it should be passed. He only differs in a matter of detail; he wants that the minimum marriageable age of girls which is fixed in this Bill at fourteen should be reduced to twelve.

He said the other day that for the first time in the history of the world, penal legislation in respect of the marriage age was being passed in this country. When the Bill was first introduced, no penal clauses were attached to it. But the orthodox people would not have it. In other countries where marriage legislation has been enacted, the legislation is far more drastic. In those countries, marriages contracted below the minimum marriageable age are void. It is not so in this country. Even when this Bill is passed, the marriages of girls of two and three and eight will still remain legal, and will not be held to be void, which is not the case in other countries. Consequently, it serves no purpose to compare the marriageable age fixed in this Bill with the marriageable ages fixed in other countries.

It is matter of satisfaction, that all the Honourable

Members of this House recognise the evil of child marriage. There may be a difference of opinion with regard to the method to be pursued, and the measures to be employed to remedy this evil.

A request was made by one of the Honourable Members that Government should not vote for the Bill but should remain neutral. That request, Sir, is tantamount to a demand that Government should not perform its primary function, which as everybody knows is to protect an individual or a class of its subjects from the invasion of his or its rights by another; and, Sir, when Government finds that this evil exists on a very large scale, Government is bound to interfere. The Honourable the Home Member in the brilliant speech which he delivered on the 4th September in this Assembly on this Bill, said:

"The first and the most reasonable conclusion, the inevitable conclusion in reference to the particular contents of this Bill, is that *there exists a great and a corroding evil in this country which is clamorous for a remedy.* That evil, Sir, is one which afflicts, in the first instance, the most defenceless, innocent section of the community, those who have the greatest claims for our protection. The evil is not only limited to that. It is not merely the large number of young girls who year by year either die or sustain serious bodily injury; but those who are acquainted with the case, those who have studied the evidence, those more particularly who have come into contact with the practical facts and the practical consequences, cannot contemplate them without *I put it no higher than this—the most serious searchings of mind, heart and conscience. It is not merely that generation after generation of young girls should be exposed to or should suffer from these evils, but there are dangers to the future generations of the country from which, if the country is not willing to adopt a remedy, it will undoubtedly suffer in its most vital and important interests.*"

And he concluded by saying:

"We are convinced that this evil exists; we are convinced that the measure of Rai Sahib Har Bilas Sarda is, at any rate, a first step in the direction of seeking a practical remedy.

"Where we find so great an evil and where we find a promising remedy, we feel that we must support what we think to be right. I trust, Sir, the great majority of this House will concur in that view. I trust they will concur in the view that this measure is a measure in the right direction and that it is their duty to support it with their suffrage."

I take this opportunity to offer my grateful thanks to the Honourable Sir James Crerar for the very eloquent, able and closely reasoned speech in which he announced the fullest support of Government to this measure. That announcement has been received from one end of the country to the other with satisfaction and thankfulness. It reminds me of the famous lines of Shakespeare. The greatest of the poets says:

"The quality of mercy is not strained;
......It is twice blessed;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:"

The support of Government to this measure is also doubly helpful—it will help the people to get rid of a widespread and a corroding evil, and it will also help Government inasmuch as it will strengthen the bonds between the Government and the people, as the people will now think that the Government is trying to help them in remedying this evil. In giving this support, the Honourable Sir James Crerar has therefore done a service to the Government as well as to the people.

In order to show with what intense anxiety and almost breathless suspense, people in different provinces of India are waiting to see this Bill passed into law, I will read a few lines from a telegram which I have received. It is from Montgomery. Rai Bahadur Ram Rakha Mal wires:

"Kindly accept and convey all concerned sincerest gratitude and congratulations on Government's just, wise support for wealth and honour, nay, life-giving and nation-building Sarda Bill, for which millions helpless minor daughters, sisters and sons now sacrificed at alter of superstition like old *suttee* will bless all

supporters for saving them from ruination by atrocities on minors which are cognizable offences like grievous hurt or rape under every civilized constitution."

Then he goes on to say that he is sending a cheque of Rs. 500 for a certain purpose. He says that the names of all supporters to this Bill should be engraved on a column in the Assembly. That is, however, a matter with which I have no concern. I have quoted the telegram to show that the country appreciates the support given by Government to the Bill.

This Bill, is a very moderate and a very mild measure. Moderate as it is, it will go a long way to rehabilitate this country in world opinion. Only the other day, we read a telegram published in the *Pioneer* and other papers saying that the *Observer* of London, a powerful paper, says that *the welcome given to the Child Marriage Bill in the Assembly shows that a new India is in the making.* In this connection, Sir, I will read to the House a passage which gives the opinion of one who is entitled to the highest respect and consideration. That passage will show that child marriage and enforced widowhood, *pardah* and other similar customs have been reacting against the liberties of our nation. I read from a book called "The India We Served", by Sir Walter R. Lawrence, where he describes an interview between H. R. H. the Prince of Wales and Mr. Gokhale. He says:

"Mr. Gokhale was the ablest Indian of his time. He was just then President of the Indian Congress and was newly arrived from Benares, where he had made an important speech which had interested the Prince. 'I gather', said the Prince, 'that you think that the people of India would be happier if they were governed by Indians rather than by the British. I may be wrong, for I can only read by their eyes, but my impression is that the people I have seen are fairly happy. Are you sure that they would be happier if you changed the present system of Government?' 'I cannot say, Sir, that they would be happier, but at any rate they would feel a pride in thinking that they were

managing their own affairs, and taking their place among the self respecting nations of the world.' 'Ah,' said the Prince, 'I can quite understand that ambition, but *how can you achieve this while the women of India remain as they are at present* in the unenlightened dark background ?' Mr. Gokhale admitted that this was the blot, the weak point in the progressive programme."

The Prince of Wales is now our King Emperor, and this Bill, Sir, is the first step towards removing that blot.

In conclusion, I ask the Honourable Members to remember the times we are living in and act accordingly. When India was self-contained, when it was more or less isolated, when steamships, telegraphs, railways and airships had not conquered distances and broken the barriers, behind which India lived a sheltered and independent life, when these had not pulled her out of her isolation into the full blaze of publicity and exposed her to forces emanating from all quarters of the world, much of what is evil passed without doing her serious material or moral injury. Bnt things have changed now and the impact of foreign influences is not only disintegrating our life but, unless we fortify ourselves with all the strength that we can command, and get rid of the evils which are eating into the vitals of our nation, they will shatter our society into pieces. It is absolutely necessary that every man, woman and child in this country should grow to his or her full growth and be able to work without shackles for the good of the country so that we may reach the goal which we have set before ourselves. I beg you gentlemen to brush aside all objections, sacerdotal or profane, ancient or modern, based on tradition or custom which stint our growth, or stand in the way of our achieving our goal. Listen not, gentlemen, to antediluvian notions which have spent their force; stick not to the

worn out dead ideas, but live in the present, the living present, and fix your eyes steadfastly on the future, the glorious future of our country which we must achieve if we are to prove ourselves true and worthy offspring of our worthy forefathers, whose bones lie mingled in the dust of our sacred land and call upon us to uplift our country from the slough of degradation, wretchedness and slavery into which our own deeds, our own sins of commission and omission have thrown her.

HINDU WIDOWS' RIGHT OF INHERITANCE

I*

While Europe's eye is fixed on mighty things,
The fate of Empires, and the fall of Kings;
While Quacks of State must each produce his plan,
And even children lisp the Rights of Man;
Amid the mighty fuss just let me mention,
The Rights of Woman merit some attention.

B. BURNS.

SIR, before I discuss the provisions of the Bill or give my reasons for bringing in this measure for enactment, I wish to make it clear that the Bill does not make any inroad into the basic principles of the Hindu law of succession or inheritance; nor does it propose to make any material alteration in the law governing the Joint Hindu family. Its sole purpose is to ameliorate the lot of Hindu widows by restoring to them their right to be owners of their husbands' property and thus enable them to live their widowed lives without being left practically at the mercy of the male members of their husbands' families.

The right of a widow to inherit her husband's property or rather become owner of her husband's property at the time of her marriage was allowed by Hindu law-givers just as a right of inheritance is allowed by the Muhammadan as well as the English law to widows. And in the rapidly changing conditions of Hindu society

*Speech delivered on 21st January 1930 in the Legislative Assembly, New Delhi, when a motion for taking the *Hindu Widow's Right of Inheritance Bill* into consideration was made.

it has now become necessary that Hindu widows, who enjoyed this right in old days should now be restored that right and be declared entitled to inherit their husbands' property. In old days a Hindu widow was legally entitled to be owner of her husband's share in the family estate. Old texts make it abundantly clear.

Under the Hindu law, as at present administered, a daughter does not get any share in her father's property as a son does, nor can she claim and sue for a share in her husband's property in the sense a son can do in his father's property. Where a widow does succeed to her husband, her right of inheritance is limited. For all practical purposes, her right has been reduced to a right of maintenance; and this right is often interpreted in courts of law in a very narrow sense. It is the modern case-law that has really reduced her to the position of a mere dependent on the family and entitled only to maintenance and residence in family property. The student of Hindu law who does not go to the texts themselves is led to believe that she was never accorded any higher rights. If anything is primarily responsible for the great hardship which has fallen to the lot of Hindu women and which has reduced them to their present utterly helpless condition as regards their legal rights, it is the false notion harboured in the present system of Hindu law, that the woman has got absolutely no right in the property of her husband, except the right of maintenance. This was not what the old Hindu law-givers ever meant, much less did they lay it down. In order to remove misunderstanding, it is necessary that we should examine the import of the texts of the Hindu law.

In spite of the very liberal conception of a woman's status in the family of her husband as co-owner of his property, formulated by the text-writers, as the foundation of all her rights either as wife or widow, English judges who decided the

earlier cases, misunderstood this fundamental basis of her right, either because of their ignorance of the language in which Hindu law texts are to be found or because of the fact that, in their own country, rights of women were then not fully recognised. Mr. M. R. Jayakar in his learned presidential address to the Forty-first Indian National Social Conference thus speaks of the matter :

"The Englishman was not accustomed until the Eighties to regard women in his own country as independently capable of acquiring or holding property. Englishwomen got this right at a very late stage. With this bias in his mind, it is not surprising that the English Judge at Westminister, in interpreting ancient Indian texts written in a language which he did not understand, and of the context of which too he was personally ignorant, adopted a position inclining more towards limited female rights than towards absolute ones. In a celebrated ruling which laid down for all time that inheritance derived by women from a male in their husband's family can never become their absolute property, the Privy Council, being solely dependent upon confusing rival quotations cited on opposite sides, have actually abrogated the Mitakshara rule in favour of more ancient and doubtful text vaguely prescribing an ascetic life for Hindu widows. The bias thus acquired by judicial decisions has unconsciously survived to present day. The English judge in England and in India, owing to his natural caution born of his ignorance of the language and the habits of the people, has fought shy of liberal interpretations except when compelled by the clearest evidence."

I will read one more passage from a valuable pamphlet written by Mr. V. V. Joshi, of Baroda:

" A widow is entitled after the death of a person who was joint with other co-parceners at the time of his death, to succeed to his interest in the undivided property, she being a co-owner with her husband. As *Vridha Manu* states: 'A sonless widow, who keeps unsullied the bed of her lord, should alone offer the cake and succeed to his *entire share*. Here the widow's right of succession to the entire share of her husband's property is definitely and very clearly asserted. In deciding the legal effect of death of either husband or wife on each other's rights, Brihaspati lays down: 'A wife deceased before her husband takes

away his consecrated fire; but if the husband dies before his faithful wife, she takes his property".

In the face of these texts, it is absurd to assume, as has unfortunately been assumed by the present *case-made law*, that with the death of her husband, wife's interest in the property as co-owner with her husband vanishes altogether. Brihastpati makes clear the whole legal position in stating thus:

"In the Veda, by the traditional law of the Smritis, and by popular usage, the wife is declared to be half the body of her husband equally sharing the outcome of good and evil act. Of him, whose wife is not dead, half (his) body survives. How should any one else take his property, while half his body lives? Although kinsmen, although his parents, although uterine brothers be living, the wife of him who dies without leaving a male issue shall succeed to his share."

Babu Golap Chandra Sarkar Sastri, while commenting upon her right, summarises the whole situation thus:

"Her right as co-owner of her husband's interest in the joint family subsists even after the husband's death, although her husband's right as distinguished from hers may pass by survivorship or by succession to sons or even to collaterals; these simply step in into the position of her husband, and she is required by Hindu law to live under their guardianship after her husband's death. The reason for recognising her right continues even after her husband's death. The inferior dependent status of her sex prevents her from taking the husband's interest by survivorship, while she is surviving half of her husband's body, a male issue is his consubstantial; and in a joint family, the female members occupy an inferior position and must live under the protection of the male members, but their interest in the family property remains unaffected by the husband's death. Besides, it is contrary to the reason for recognising this right, and contrary to the Mitakshara and to its fundamental doctrine, namely, that partition cannot *create* any right but proceeds upon the footing of pre-existing rights, and that it is by virtue of the wife's right to the husband's property that she obtains a share even when partition is made by her sons after the husband's death, and that it is by virtue of this right that she continues to enjoy the family property so long as it remains joint after the husband's death."

The fact is, by marriage a girl is cut off from her father's family and introduced into the family of her husband as if she were born therein at the date of her marriage, her *Gotra* becoming the *Gotra* of her husband's family, she being united with her husband in blood and body. Husband and wife constitute one entity, the wife being half, *ardhangini*. And as the sage Datta puts it, "Wealth is considered as common to the married pair". Not only was wealth regarded as being owned by husband and wife jointly, but whenever occasion arose for dividing the estate among those having an interest in the family estate, the wife or mother was counted as a sharer as if she were a coparcener, and this is exactly the reason why the mother was given a share equal to that of a son on partition effected amongst her sons either in the lifetime of her husband or after his death. As an acute lawyer and an oriental scholar puts it:

> "She gets a share in virtue of the co-ownership she acquires from the moment of her marriage in her husband's property, by reason of her being the lawfully wedded wife. It is erroneous to suppose that partition creates her right to get a share; for, according to the Mitakshara, partition does not create any right but it proceeds upon the footing of pre-existing rights."

It is thus clear that the fact that the wife is the co-owner of her husband's property is the only basis upon which her right to a share on partition can be explained.

If maintenance was to be all that she was entitled to, that right could have been secured by making a provision to that effect, as has been made in favour of those who are regarded as dependents on the family. Where then was the necessity of giving her a share equal to that of her son or husband unless it was as an assertion of her right as co-owner in the property? Her right to succession to the property of her deceased husband was admitted on the basis of her status as co-owner with her husband,

and Mitakshara expresses it in these words :

"If it be objected that jointness is declared even as regards ownership of property in the texts : yes, the wife's ownership in the husband's property is certainly shown by the text. Therefore the ownership in the husband's property is vested in the wife also."

Jimutavahana makes it clearer still. While criticising the position taken up by some commentators, he states :

"Nor is there any proof of the proposition that the wife's ownership in her husband's property accruing to her from her marriage *ceases* on his death."

Eugene A. Hecker in her "Short History of Woman's Rights with special reference to England and the United States", p. 2, (Edition 1911), says :

"Throughout her life, a woman was supposed to remain absolutely under the power of father, husband, or guardian, and to do nothing without their consent. In ancient times this authority was so great that the father and husband could, after calling a family council, put the woman to death without public trial."

Pollock and Maitland, quoted by Miss Hecker, say :

"Our law institutes no community even of moveables between husband and wife. Whatever moveables the wife has at the date of the marriage become the husband's, and the husband is entitled to take possession of and thereby to make his own whatever moveables she becomes entitled to during the marriage, and without her concurrence he can sue for all debts that are due her."

It was only in 1882 A. D. that the Married Women's Property Act was enacted, which finally did away with the husband's ownership of his wife's property. Thus, as the *English judges were unfamiliar with the rights of women in property in their own country, they interpreted the Hindu law in a most narrow spirit* with the result that woman's ancient rights in India have been curtailed to an alarming extent not warranted by the true interpretation of the texts.

The Allahabad High Court in 1879, in the case of Jamna *vs.* Machul Sahu, recognised the wife's co-ownership in husband's property in a subordinate sense, but this right was modified by the Bombay High Court in 1880 in Narmadabai *vs.* Mahadeo Narayan, Kashinath Narayan and Shamabai by implying that the co-ownership does not involve independent or equal powers of disposition or exclusive enjoyment or ownership in the ordinary sense; while the Calcutta High Court curtailed this right still further in 1903 in Punna Bibee *vs.* Radha Kissen Das, by stating that the wife cannot be regarded as co-owner so as to be able to enforce a claim for maintenance against a purchaser for value. This curtailment has been done in the face of clear texts to the contrary. It is, however, clear that *the Hindu law-givers made wives co-owners of their husband's property and full owners of that property after the death of their husbands.*

Until recently, when Hindu society was not so much subjected to outside influence, though women had been deprived of certain necessary rights enforceable at law, the social traditions and the noble influences of Hindu culture secured to the Hindu widow a position of respect and comfort in the family. And those who are acquainted with the conditions obtaining in Hindu family life know that in all families where Hindu traditions have not been forgotten but are still alive, widows are treated with great respect and consideration, and elderly widows even exercise a predominant influence in domestic and social life. But with the gradual abandonment of those ideals which the originators of the joint Hindu family had in view, in consequence of the slow disintegration of the joint Hindu family system under the impact of foreign political, economic and social influences, and owing to the

acceptance in an increasing degree of new ideals of life and conduct, due partly to the introduction of foreign culture and partly to a new valuation of things, the entire fabric of Hindu society is undergoing a change, and the position of women and particularly of widows is becoming more and more difficult. With the disappearance of moral safe-guards which existed while old Hindu traditions were honoured and acted upon, and owing to their non-possession of legally enforceable rights to property, the position of widows is becoming precarious. The only remedy now is to recognise the right of a Hindu widow to family property and thus safeguard her legitimate position. This is the *raison d'etre* of this Bill.

It must be remembered that women all over the country are now awakening to a realisation of their precarious position and are demanding that the time has arrived when their rights should be recognised in law. In their Conferences held in different parts of India in recent years, they have demanded rights of inheritance. The All-India Women's Conference, which meets yearly, and which met at Poona under the Presidentship of Her Highness the Maharani of Baroda; at Delhi under the Presidentship of H H. the Begum of Bhopal, and last year at Patna with the Rani of Mandi as President, and the various provincial constituent conferences of women have been demanding rights of inheritance for women. The Gujrati Women's Conference held at Ahmedabad on 8th December last; the Benares Constituent Conference of Women on 10th December, the Simla Women's Conference on 10th September last, the Mysore Women's Conference, which met on 8th and 9th November last; the Delhi Branch of the All-India Women's Conference, which met on the 26th November; the Ajmer-Merwara Women's Conference, which met on the 2nd December last and various other Conferences have demanded this right of inheritance.

The Indian National Social Conference, which is the most important social organisation representing men and women of the whole of India, in its forty-second session held at Lahore during the last Christmas week, over which I had the honour to preside, unanimously supported the present Bill and demanded its passage into law. The Rajputana Women's Conference held in November, 1928, also demanded the passing of this Bill.

It is thus clear that there is a general demand on the part of the women of India that the law should recognise their share in the family property, and important public bodies like the Indian National Social Conference have given their support to the present Bill.

Coming to the provisions of the Bill, I have to say that the Bill does not administer any deep cut across the Hindu law of succession; nor does it alter the line of succession by disinheriting persons who are co-parceners under the Mitakshara school or who would become co-parceners on death of an ancestor under the Dayabhaga school. As I have said before, the Bill aims at improving the conditions in which a Hindu widow has to live by giving her a certain well-defined right of inheriting property from her husband, without in any way materially altering the general law governing the joint Hindu family, and also without creating new rights in addition to those already existing. This Bill in no way affects the rights of those who possess those rights by birth in a Hindu family under the Hindu law. It only affects those who acquire some rights in addition to their birth-rights by the death of a member of the family, or those who had no rights in the family property at all and who, by the happening of a certain event, *i.e.*, the death of a person leaving no male issue, acquire certain rights in the property of another family. In other words, it only affects the rights of survivors and reversioners, which rights have

come into existence owing to recent interpretations of old texts. The Bill thus follows the line of least interference with the basic principles of the Hindu joint family system.

Under the Mitakshara law, a male member of a joint Hindu family acquires coparcenary rights by birth. Under the Dayabhaga, the coparcenary rights accrue to sons not on their birth but on the death of their father. As a widow can only claim the share which her husband would have got under the Mitakshara law, leaving intact the shares of her husband's sons and other male members of the family, even the widows in families governed by the Dayabhaga law will be able, under the proposed law, only to claim that restricted share without in any way interfering with the shares of her husband's sons or other co-parceners. Thus, there is no disinheriting any co-parceners or would-be coparceners. And this is made clearer by the contents of the proviso to clause 3, which lays down that if the husband leaves no male issue and the widow adopts a son, she will share her husband's property with the adopted son.

Sir, I have known cases—and Honourable Members cannot be unaware of them—where people who throughout the life of a married man, were at loggerheads with him and were his enemies, laid claim on his death to all his property, depriving his widow of her ownership of it. It is true the present law gives a widow a life interest in her husband's property if he was the sole owner of that property, yet the general illiteracy and ignorance prevailing amongst the women in this country; the *purdah* and the seclusion of women from society, and other special features of life in this country make it well nigh impossible for widows to get even their restricted rights enforced by law.

I find that the Honourable the Law Member has tabled an amendment asking that the Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion thereon.

If Government wish to adopt that course, I would not object to it. I would accept the amendment that the Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion, if the amendment provides that the Bill, after circulation, becomes available for consideration at the next Session of the Assembly before the life of this Assembly expires. Sir, I move that the Bill be taken into consideration.

HINDU WIDOWS' RIGHT OF INHERITANCE

II*

......Man to man so oft unjust,
Is always so to woman;— One sole bond
Awaits them, treachery is all their trust;
Taught to conceal their bursting hearts despond over their idol.

BYRON, *Don Juan.*

THE Hindu Widows' Right of Inheritance Bill was first introduced by me in the Legislative Assembly on 26 September 1929 and was taken into consideration on the 21st of January 1930, and ordered to be circulated. In pursuance of that decision, the Bill was circulated, and opinions were received. On 15 July 1930, the Bill came up again before the House and a motion to refer it to the Select Committee was made. But before the discussion concluded and the Select Committee could meet, the Assembly was dissolved and the Bill consequently lapsed. The first session of the present Assembly took place last year in Delhi and I reintroduced the Bill in a slightly modified form—modified to meet the chief objection taken to the provisions of the first Bill by some of the associations and persons to whom it had been circulated. The Bill thus comes up before the House in a form acceptable to the vast majority of those who were consulted by Government on the previous occasion, and whose opinions were circulated to Members. It will be observed that the Bill has been before the public for over two years.

*Speech delivered in the Legislative Assembly, New Delhi, on 26 January 1932 when the new Hindu Widows' Right of Inheritance Bill was taken into consideration.

Before discussing the provisions of the Bill, I wish to read a few of the opinions of high judicial authorities and other responsible persons to show the urgency of the enactment of the measure.

Mr. Justice Naimatullah says:

"The position of widows in Hindu families except where she happens to be widow of a sonless person is one of helplessness."

The S. D. O. Bansdah, says :

"Hindu widows are proverbial in their miserable condition. I know of many an instance in which the widow lived in luxury in the lifetime of her husband but soon after his death she had to bear untold suffering and trouble."

The Collector of Balia says :

"The present condition of the widow is the most deplorable thing imaginable. I know instances where ladies had to pass their lives on needle and other such income while in the lifetime of their husbands they used to live as *Ranis*. These are not exceptions, but a rule in all big joint Hindu families. The exception is when a widow is mercifully treated."

The Chairman, District Board and President, Hindu Sabha, Balia, says :

"The condition of a Hindu widow has become proverbial in helplessness. The treatment accorded to her is simply deplorable and repugnant to the very sense of humanity and decency. The moment the husband dies, his better half begins to be looked upon as a positive evil in the family. She is at the mercy of the collaterals who want to get rid of her as soon as possible. The manifold cruelties meted out to the widow can better be realised than described."

Rao Bahadur V. M. Kelkar says :

"The lot of the Hindu widow in joint Hindu family left to the tender mercies of her unsympathetic relatives who consider that there is no justification for her existence after her husband's death who look upon her as a superfluous person to be tolerated as an inevitable evil, has been the subject of numerous complaints in the Press and on the platform."

The Collector of Tinnevelly says :

"The moral sense even of those who are not reformers is shocked by the *preference of distant reversioners to the widow.* I consider the Bill most welcome and most necessary."

The Commissioner of Multan says :

"The position of a Hindu widow under the Hindu law of inheritance is really deplorable."

The Commissioner, South Division, Bombay, says :

"The position of most Hindu widows is deplorable."

The Sri Shivaji Mahratta Society, Poona says:

"The plight of Hindu widows is extremely distressing and deplorable. She is completely at the mercy of the male relations of her husband."

The Honourable Mr. B. V. Jadhav says :

"The condition of a Hindu widow is indeed very deplorable. She is completely at the mercy of her *Bhaibands.*"

Justice Sir Jwala Prasad says :

"The widows of a joint Mitakshara family are left at the mercy of the agnates of her husband."

I will now deal briefly with a few of the matters to which attention has been called by various people to whom the Bill had been circulated. Some three or four of the people who were consulted, say that the Bill goes against their semi-religious or religio-social beliefs. Sir, where the belief is sincere and genuine, I sympathise with the people holding it. No one wishes to tread unsympathetically on the toes of people's beliefs. They are Hindus and I am a Hindu of Hindus. I would, however, respectfully point out to them that this Bill does not even remotely affect their religious beliefs. *Devolution of property is a human device to promote personal and social welfare.* It is governed by rights which the collective wisdom of peoples

inhabiting different countries of the world attaches in those countries to relationship, some of which are natural and others created by necessities of life. And as human relationships are liable to change, readjustments of things have to be made to secure happiness and welfare; and the laws governing those readjustments must also be changed as necessity arises. In one society a system called the joint Hindu family system prevails; in another it does not. Therefore the laws of property governing the two societies must necessarily be different. Joint Hindu family system is not a matter of religion. Were it so, no provision for separation of members forming a joint Hindu family could be provided or tolerated by the *Sastras*. The very fact that the system itself contains provisions for separation of members of a Hindu joint family and for bringing the joint character of the family to an end, proves conclusively that the system is not a matter of religion, but a social and economic convenience.

Then we find that the laws relating to inheritance amongst the Hindus vary with provinces and communities according to values attached to human relationships, as illustrated by the Mitakshara, the Dayabhaga and the Mayuka schools; while there are communities which are governed by customary law, which also varies from province to province and community to community. Hindu law-givers differ radically amongst themselves as to the rules of inheritance. That being so, how can a solitary change in that law or the application of a rule of inheritance obtaining in one province to another be termed an interference with religion in any sense of the term. And if there are people who hold that every act of a Hindu during his life, whether as regards food, clothing, bath, travel, habitation, culture or social relations is a matter of religion, then these acts cannot be held to be sacrosanct,

for, how can rules, often contradictory of one another be all sacrosanct ?

It is perfectly true that laws governing inheritance should not be lightly changed. But where grave changes in the social organisation of communities take place owing to the changing circumstances of a country, particularly where owing to the disintegrating action of foreign influences and of forces originating beyond national control, the outlook on life and ideals governing life are changed, changes must be made in the laws of inheritance to bring about a readjustment of relations in order to preserve just rights and secure happiness and prosperity. This in no way interferes with the basic principles of the faith to which people owe allegiance.

An objection is sometimes taken, as has been done in this case, to social legislation on the ground that piecemeal legislation is not desirable. Dr. Ganganath Jha of Allahabad deprecates tinkering with Hindu law here and there. Does he then really expect that the whole of the Hindu law should be thrown away and a new system be substituted in its place? *Reform can only be piecemeal.* As times change and changed circumstances require readjustments, changes are introduced. Conserve what is useful and change what altered circumstances require to be changed. Later, if what is now useful ceases to be useful and is found to be harmful owing to changed circumstances, then that should also be changed. A certain part of the human body becomes diseased, no doctor out of Bedlam would advise that instead of treating the diseased part by applying medicines to it or performing an operation on it, the whole body should be subjected to that operation. A crack occurs in the wall of a house, would you repair it or go and pull the whole house down and rebuild it ?

Another objection raised whenever justice is sought

to be done to the widow or the woman is that she is ignorant and does not know how to manage things and would only waste the property if it is given to her. This argument is of the any-stick-is-good-enough-to-beat-a-dog-with variety. You deprive people of all arms and then say they are not martial. Moreover, it is a libel on women to say that they would waste all property, if it is given to them. Members of this Honourable House will, I am sure, from personal experience, deny that. An instance here or there of waste would occur; but because in a rare case, a woman misuses her property, it does not follow that all women should be deprived of their rights. Do we not constantly meet with cases of young men wasting their patrimony not only to their own detriment but to the grave injury of the women dependent on them. Have you ever proposed that young men should not be given shares in property ? Why is this argument trotted out when rights of women are concerned and not when the inheritance law for men is discussed. The only proper and effective answer to this objection would be given, when women would assemble and discuss and decide what rights should be given to men and what withheld from them, for there are so many instances of men wasting their patrimony. And as sure as the day follows night, the day is coming when in our legislatures, women will have their say as to what rights should be enjoyed by men and what not.

It has also been alleged by one or two persons that if women are given rights of sharing property with men, grave disturbances would occur in Hindu society. May I ask in reply, what cataclysms have occurred in those societies where women do enjoy rights of property and where the law gives them shares in their father's property as well as their husband's? I am surprised that men should so far forget themselves and belie their courtesy and culture as to utter such deprecatory

things about a class wherein are to be found their mothers, sisters, daughters and wives.

I will now cite an instance to show how little thought even the highest judicial officers of Government sometimes give to Bills circulated to them for expression of their opinion. Mr. Macnair, Additional Judicial Commissioner of the Central Provinces, says:

"In other systems of law, a widow succeeds only to a share in her husband's rights. I therefore do not approve of the Bill."

Mr. Macnair betrays ignorance of the conditions and facts of life in India, as also of the other systems of law of which he talks. He conveniently forgets when he talks of those systems of law that those systems of law give every girl a share in her father's property and what she gets from her husband's property is in addition to what she got from her parents. Amongst Hindus, a girl gets no share in the paternal estate. This makes all the difference in the world between Hindu law and the English and Muslim systems of law. He also thinks that clause 3 'disinherits adult sons'. Nothing of the kind. Those adult sons, unless they separated from their father during his lifetime and were given their shares, remain members of a joint Hindu family and, as coparceners, are under the Mitakshara law fully entitled to their shares. The share of the deceased husband of the widow which she would get under this Bill always was exclusive of the share of the sons.

I now come to the provisions of the Bill and would deal with them briefly. Before I do so, however, I must make it clear that the present Bill differs from the Bill introduced and circulated in 1929 A.D. in one important respect. The old Bill provided in clause 3 (1) that the share that the widow was entitled to get on partition should become her absolute property. When that Bill was circulated, most of the criticism was directed against this provision. While

sympathy with the object of the Bill was universally expressed, objection was taken in some quarters to giving a widow a share absolutely. The great majority of those who objected to that Bill objected only to property vesting absolutely in the widow as it cut across rights of survivors. They said that they would support the Bill if the share was of the nature of a widow's estate.

Now, though justice requires that a widow should have full rights in the shares she gets, yet in order to disarm opposition and meet the views of the majority of those who took objection to the Bill only because of this provision of the Bill, I have in the present Bill deleted the words, "This share shall become her absolute property."

If we now take this alteration in the Bill into consideration we find that an overwhelming majority of opinions of those whom the Bill was circulated is in favour of the Bill. Counting a High Court as one, when it has expressed no opinion, but counting separately the opinions of individual judges when they have expressed their opinions on the Bill, we find that leaving out of account about seventeen or eighteen bodies or persons who have not expressed opinion either way, there are ninety-six opinions in favour of the present Bill and forty-five against it. Many of those who are in favour of the Bill suggest minor amendments and many of those who are against the Bill also suggest some amendment or other.

Of the opinions recorded, all are of men or bodies of men except three, two of which are opinions of individual women, and one of a women's association. This shows that the circulation of the Bill was unfair and that injustice has been done to women by Government by not inviting the opinions of the class, to remedy the wrongs of which, the Bill has been introduced. The Bill ought to have been circulated to all women's associations

and to the prominent women in the country. Had this been done, there would have been a chorus of approval of the Bill in the country, for the entire woman-hood of India would have been found in favour of the Bill. This is clear from the unanimous support which all the women consulted have given to the measure. They all heartily support the Bill. The Bill has also received support from one and all of the Women's Associations that have otherwise come to know of this Bill.

A significant fact comes to light in connection with these opinions. One of the opinions is that of Lady Jugmohandas, wife of Sir Jugmohandas of Bombay, who was asked to give her opinion. And what do we find? While Sir Jugmohandas is against any change in the law and is against the Bill, Lady Jugmohandas supports the Bill, and adds that the Gujrati Stri Mandal (Gujrati Women's Association) of which she is President, whole-heartedly supports the Bill. What can be a better and a more forceful illustration than this difference of opinion between the Bombay Knight and his wife, of the awakening of women in Hindu society; for it proves that even the women of the most orthodox families, supposed to be under the influence and sway of old-world notions and of reactionary husbands and *heads* of families, are awakening to the realities of the situation, and are rapidly realising their abject, unstable and humiliating legal position in the social polity of India? They are beginning to assert themselves and show their silent strength, and are determined to regain their proper and rightful place in society to enable them to contribute their full share towards the building of a strong, self-confident and self-respecting nation. I trust, this House will take note of the fact that the women of India are determined to fight for justice and liberty for their country and for themselves. And it behoves the

members of this House to recognize their claim and assign them a position in society which justice and honour require us to assign to them.

Some of the criticism levelled against the Bill is due to a misunderstanding of the provisions of its clause 3, sub-clause (2), due perhaps to the fact that the language is not clear. It has been construed to mean that when a Hindu who is not a member of a joint Hindu family leaves a son or sons and a widow, his property under this clause goes to his widow to the exclusion of his sons, and critics have complained that the Bill favours the widow to the deprivation of the sons of their rights. The Collector of Madras says :

"I think that it will be enough if the widow takes an equal share along with the sons of the property left by her husband".

This, as a matter of fact, is what the Bill provides. Sub-clause (2) of clause 3 states that the widow will take the property of her husband only when at his death he was not a member of a joint Hindu family. Now if he had a son or sons, he was, under the Mitakshara law, a member of a joint Hindu family with his son or sons, and this sub-clause does not apply to his case. His case would be governed by clause 3, sub-clause (1). The Select Committee may amend the language of clause 3 so as to make the intention of the Bill quite clear that, whether a family is governed by the Mitakshara or the Dayabhaga, the sons shall always have their shares in their father's property. Sir, when the proviso to sub-clause (2) gives half the property of the deceased even to an adopted son—a son adopted by the widow to her husband after his death according to law or custom, how could the Bill be construed so as to deprive the sons of her husband by her or his other wives of their shares in the property ? Of course, if a man's sons separated from him after receiving their shares of the family property, then his property on his

death passes to the widow. For a son could not claim a double share for himself.

The Bill as it now stands does not touch any one's rights in the property. The right of survivorship remains intact. Even the rights of reversioners are, in the main, safe. Though the Collector of Tinnevelly voices the opinions (Paper 1, page 34) and sentiments of thoughtful people when he says that, "The moral sense even of those who are not reformers is shocked by the preference of distant reversioners to the widow," yet even this is safeguarded and it is left to the Select Committee or this House to treat the widow more liberally and recognise her claims in preference to those of distant and very often hostile relations.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize that by accepting my motion, the House only accepts the principle of the Bill, which is that the lot of a Hindu widow, who at present neither gets a share in her father's property nor in her husband's, should be ameliorated by giving her some rights in the property which belonged to her husband, for her support in her widowed life. How much is she to get, and in what shape, are matters not vital to the Bill and will be decided by the Select Committee and this Honourable House. It is the business of the Select Committee to improve the draft where necessary and make clear any point that may be obscure and define the extent and nature of the right that the Bill gives to the widow. This may be necessary in view of the fact that when a man leaves a widow and one or more sons, the son under the Dayabhaga law does not become a coparcener by birth, though he does so under the Mitakshara law. The Bill has absolutely no intention to disinherit any son.

I appeal to the Honourable Members of this House—to my European and Muslim colleagues, to support this Bill as it attempts only to give to the

Hindu widow only a part of what their own laws already give to widows governed by those laws, and therefore deserves their support. (*Mr. K. Ahmed*: "We have no objection.") I also appeal to the Hindu Members that this Bill is but a humble attempt to ameliorate to some extent the lot of a helpless class of women who, as members of Hindu society, are subject to grave disabilities and have to stand the rigours of a life which, alas, only Hindu widows in this world have to do! Sir, I will not read to you the many letters I have received from widows from the various provinces of India giving me harrowing accounts of their sufferings, all due to their possessing no legal rights to property. Sir, I move.

HINDU WIDOWS' RIGHT OF INHERITANCE

III*

O fairest of creation, last and best
Of all God's works, creature in whom excell'd
Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd,
Holy, divine, good, amiable or sweet?

MILTON, *Paradise Lost.*

I find, Sir, that fifteen Members have spoken on this Bill. Of these, five have spoken against it. One has spoken against the Bill because, though he sympathises with the object of the Bill, he says it is badly drafted and therefore he is against it. Thus six Members are against the Bill and nine are in favour of it. The principal opponent of the Bill, who made a long speech, was Raja Bahadur Krishnamachariar, and I shall first deal with the points which he made in that speech. My friend referring to me, said—I use his words:

"He said it is only a question of principle that is involved; the rest and the more important thing would be done by the Select Committee, that question of principle being or at least asserting that the Hindu widow is subject to all sorts of persecutions and tyrannies which human wit could devise."

These are his words. I do not know, Sir, if any man could more grossly misrepresent what I said. My speech was delivered in the open House. I wonder if any one who heard me could say that the principle of

*Speech delivered in the Legislative Assembly, New Delhi on the 4th February, 1932, while replying to the debate on the Hindu Widows' Right of Inheritance Bill.

the Bill was that the widow was subjected to all sorts of persecutions and tyrannies that human wit could devise. He then asks. " Has any widow complained to Mr. Sarda ?". Yes, several. And then we find every day widows in various provinces complaining of their hard conditions and asking for relief. I will read only two of the letters I have received. One of them is in Hindi and I do not intend to read it to the Assembly. I will only say that it has been sent to me by the widow of an officer in Kotah, who was Assistant Inspector General of Police there; and she relates her harrowing tale of misery, how she has been driven out of the family without any provision being made for maintenance by her relations. The second letter which I received yesterday is this:

" Your active sympathy for the deplorable state of Hindu widows and your efforts to get them redress have inspired me to narrate you the pitiable condition of my daughter whose husband died some 5 months back. I belong to a Deccani Brahmin community. My daughter was married at the age of 16 to a young man of the same caste. He was an employe of the Imperial Bank of India at Dhulia drawing Rs. 160 per month. All of a sudden he was thrown off the service. This was a great shock to him. The result was he caught consumption and died of it after a protracted illness of one and a half year. My daughter could hardly enjoy the married life for 3 or 4 months. This is my only daughter. I spent on her marriage Rs. 4,000—Rs. 2,000 dowry and Rs. 2,000 for other expenses.

"As she has now become a widow, her father-in-law who is a moneyed man would not allow her to stay with him though they were living jointly during the life-time of her husband. In order to get maintenance allowance from her father-in-law, I asked a local pleader to issue a notice on her father-in-law claiming maintenance at Rs. 25 per month, *stridhan* for about Rs. 5,000, and Rs. 2,000 on account of the life policy of her husband. The pleader informed me that whatever property that belonged to her father-in-law was self-acquired and hence the father-in-law was not legally bound to maintain his daughter-in-law. It is only moral obligation. My daughter cannot therefore claim maintenance as of right under the existing Hindu law. If the

opposition party could see with their eyes wide open they will see this sort of injustico towards widows in almost every Hindu family. Hindu widows at once become foroigners to the house which belonged to them during the life-time of their husbands. By bringing forth a Bill in the Legislative Assembly for a share for Hindu widows in the husband's property you have certainly espoused the just cause of Hindu widows. May you be successful in your attempt."

If my Honourable friend thinks that the condition of the Hindu widows is that of very happy women, he must be living in a dreamland of his own. Then he said: "of course any one could get some of these letters written, but whether the writers understood the contents of those letters or not is a different matter". I had hoped that a man of Raja Bahadur's credentials would not stoop to make such unfair insinuations. I will not say much further on that point.

Speaking of Government's attitude towards social legislation, my Honourable friend, speaking of his leader Sir Hari Singh Gour's Bill on the divorce question, said:

"At that time the Home Member put his foot down very heavily and said that before Government decided to support that Bill, they ought to have before them strong cogent evidence that the community or a portion of the people affected would agree or welcome it."

I am willing to accept this attitude of Government towards social legislation. The Honourable the Home Member knows very well that the women of India demand this law. If Government want evidence "that the community or a portion of the people affected would agree or welcome it" what better evidence could there be than the fact that of the fifteen Members who have spoken, five have opposed it and ten supported the Bill. Of these, two were Muslims and the rest were Hindus. So far as the Assembly goes, the Bill has been opposed by only five and supported by ten. Mr. Sen, who spoke towards the end of the debate, seemed to deny the very basis upon which the Bill is based. He

and Raja Bahadur Krishnamachariar did not admit or accept that the condition of the Hindu widow is at all miserable. They think that the widows are treated with every respect and consideration and nothing has to be done to ameliorate their condition. On this point the Raja Bahadur dismissed the Honourable Mr. Yamin Khan as being a non-Hindu and therefore absolutely ignorant of Hindu conditions. But as to the condition of Hindu widows, is not Justice Jwala Pershad a Hindu, who says that the unfortunate widows of Hindus are left to the mercy of their husbands' relations? Are members of the Sivaji Maratha Society, Poona, who say that the plight of Hindu widows is extremely distressing and terrible, non-Hindus, and do they not know what the condition of the Hindu society is? Is Rao Bahadur Kelkar, a most respectable man in the Central Provinces, who says that the lot of the Hindu widow in joint Hindu family is deplorable as she is left to the tender mercies of her unsympathetic relatives who consider that there is no justification for her existence after her husband's death, not a Hindu? Is Saligram Singh, the President of the Hindu Sabha, Ballia, not a Hindu, because he says that the condition of the Hindu widow has become proverbial in helplessness, that the treatment accorded to her is simply deplorable and repugnant to all sense of humanity and decency? Is not Mr. Justice Niamatullah, who has passed several years of his life on the Bench and became acquainted with the condition of all grades of society in the country, in a position to speak with authority on the question? And do not also many other people who have had opportunities of studying the conditions of Hindu society, although they are not Hindus, consider that the position of Hindu widows is bad? Sir, here in this Assembly, Government allow all Members, Hindus as well as others, the right of voting and the right to make laws for the whole

country concerning all people. Every member has a right to say what the condition of a particular section of the society is, if he happens to have experience of that society.

The Honourable Member then read out the opinion of Diwan Bahadur Sundaram Chetty, and quoted him as saying:

"This Bill, which is designed with the object of ameliorating the position of Hindu widows in respect of their rights of inheritance over their husbands' estate, tends to effect drastic changes in the Mitakshara law now prevailing in India. Two of the basic principles of this school of law as understood and settled by a long course of judicial decisions are the right of survivorship in the joint Hindu family and the qualified or limited ownership of a female heir in the property inherited by her. The present Bill cuts at the very root of these principles in order to better the status of Hindu widows."

The Honourable Member omitted important passages and quoted some further passages to suit his case; but you will find, Sir, that in what he has quoted from the opinion of Diwan Bahadur Sundaram Chetty he has employed all the arts of an interested advocate and has quoted a few lines here and a few lines there out of their context and made a mosaic—as the Honourable the Home Member told us yesterday. (Laughter.) For instance the Honourable Member omits these words.

"Judged from the standpoint of the Hindu widow alone, regardless of all other considerations which prevail in laying down the principles of the Mitakshara law, the Bill may seem to be a laudable measure. *I am not unmindful of the deplorable condition of the widow of a co-parcener* drifting from a state of affluence, respect and command on the death of her husband to a state of dependence on his surviving co-parceners for maintenance."

And also:

"Instead of being a maintenance-holder, the widow can have the benefit of enjoying her husband's share till her death, with limited powers of disposition. I would suggest that larger powers of disposition may be granted to the widow while she enjoys her

husband's estate, and a more liberal view of her disposing power may be taken. Her powers may be declared to be on a par with those of the manager of a joint Hindu family. This would be reasonable and serve the interests of the widow without affecting the reversionary rights."

Now, Sir, all I have done is to embody the above in my Bill; I have given her only a limited ownership and not absolute ownership cutting out the survivors or reversioners.

I will now quote from another lawyer of the Madras Presidency, Mr. Venkatanarayana Nayudu Garu, C.I.E., Secretary to the Madras Government, Law Department. He says:

"It would be sufficient if the widow is allowed an equal share along with the sons, of the property left by her husband and the whole of it in the absence of sons. I am to add that, as suggested by the Women's Indian Association, Tinnevelly, provision may be made in the Bill to the effect that, if the widow remarries, the property will revert to her previous husband's heirs."

Now this is exactly what the provisions of my Bill amount to. The Raja Bahadur relies on the opinion of Sir Sivaswami Aiyar and he revels in quoting it. Now the fact is that Sir Sivaswami Aiyar, as has been stated also by my Honourable friend, the Leader of my Party, is against the framework of the Bill. He says:

"It is, however, a settled law even in these Provinces that she cannot enforce partition but is entitled to a share only when partition takes place at the instance of sons or other male members or when the interest of a member is severed by a sale in execution. Though some of the text books speak of the *co-ownership* of the wife or mother, it is only in a loose sense, inasmuch as the widow or mother has no right to enforce a partition of her own motion and cannot object to alienation by her deceased husband for consideration or even to a testamentary disposition by him."

This is what the law at present is. I may say that this law is the law made by English judges who did not know the language of the original texts and who did not know that the texts of the Hindu law went much

beyond what was allowed at the time in England by English law. The fact is that the Sastras do not speak in a loose manner of rights of co-ownership; it is the English judges who have interpreted the law so as seriously to curtail the Hindu women's right to property. *Sir Sivaswami Aiyar simply accepts what the English judges tell him the Hindu law is.* But we are not going to do that. There are foreign scholars who interpret the holy Vedas, which all Hindus believe to be inspired, as songs of shepherds and goat-herds. Will my Honourable friend the Raja Bahahur accept this view of the Vedas which has been given by European scholars? If not, why should we accept the interpretation of our laws given by those who were ignorant of the language of those books.

Then, most of the criticism which was levelled by Sir Sivaswami Aiyar against the Bill applied to the old Bill which gave an absolute right to the widow in the property she got from the joint Hindu family, and not to the present Bill which gives her only a widow's estate. The fact is that people like my Honourable friend, whose minds are cast in a mediaeval mould, neither care for the law as laid down in the older books, nor appreciate the changes the world is rapidly undergoing now. Their mental attitude reminds me of a story given in that celebrated drama, *Sakuntala*, by Kalidas It was becoming dark and a Brahman came and put a garland of flowers round the neck of a king. As it was dark, the king felt the coldness of the petals round his neck and thought it was a snake and cried out. "A snake is round my neck; save me, save me!" He would not touch the garland to see whether it was a snake or not. as it was dark and he was afraid of being bitten by it. This is the mentality of people who would not look into the texts themselves, who would not see what the Hindu law actually is as laid down in the Sastras, but would simply cry out in

the darkness of their ignorance: "Save our religion, because it is in danger."

Before, however, I leave the Honourable Raja Bahadur I wish to say a word about the way in which he wanted to make capital out of some opinion which I was reported to have given on some Bill of Bakhshi Sohan Lal which had been referred to me by Government for opinion years ago. He has not produced the Bill to show what it was. He has only quoted two passage from my opinion and repeated one of those passages four times within 10 minutes as if he had nothing else to say. That passage is:

"As in the field of politics so in social matters, short-cuts and sudden leaps taken in defiance of the laws of evolution which govern complicated organizations as well as individual lives, end in failure after causing endless suffering. In politics as well as in social matters the task before the people of India is laborious requiring unceasing labour, patience, sacrifice and intelligent direction."

Have I anywhere in this Bill transgressed the lesson contained in these words? Do these words mean that because short-cuts and sudden leaps end in failure, therefore no reform of any kind is to be effected, and no wrong of any kind is to be righted? Does this mean that you should sit dumb and helpless and allow evils to flourish? Have I ever said that in social matters the task before the people of India is not laborious, requiring unceasing labour, patience, sacrifice and intelligent direction? Is not the fact that I had to work unceasingly and patiently for 4½ years before one Bill of mine, the Child Marriage Bill, was passed; and has not this Bill dealing with a disability of a particular class of women, taken two years to reach the stage when I am able to move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee? Have I done anything in the nature of a short-cut or taken a sudden leap? Have I proposed that the caste system as it obtains at present

in Hindu society be declared illegal and put down as an offence? That would have been a short-cut. Then, what is wrong in what I have said? If I have attempted to get an Act passed to remedy a minor or a major evil or remove a disability from which the Hindu widows suffer, have I done anything to give a lie to the statement quoted above? The task of purging the Hindu society of the evils it suffers from is difficult enough, is wearisome enough and is long enough, but it is the existence of men in that society with the notions of the cavemen, with the ideals of the Stone Age, who wish to bring down humanity to the level of the obsolete, old-world ideas that is making the task still more difficult, still more onerous, far longer and far more wearisome. Sir, I will leave it at that and also leave with it my Honourable friend Raja Bahadur Krishnamachariar.

I will now proceed to say a word or two about what my Honourable friend Mr. Lalchand Navalrai has said. He says that he is not a reactionary and that he supported the Child Marriage Bill. He says that the present Bill is badly drafted and therefore he opposes it. As an illustration he says:

> "So far as the giving of the share for Hindu widows is concerned the preamble says: 'A Bill to secure a share for Hindu widows in their husband's family property'; it does not define the share."

He complains that the preamble does not define that share. Now, may I ask him, if the preamble of a property Bill has ever defined a share? Then he says that the Hindu law divides the property, on partition, in particular shares and those shares are not shown in the Bill. He complains that my Bill does not show clearly what share a widow would be entitled to. This reminds me of a story which many Honourable Members may have read. The love romance of Yusuf

and Zuleikha was recited by a poet, and after it was finished and everybody had enjoyed it and said that it was very good, one of the hearers got up and said : This romance is very good, Sir, but was Zuleikha a man or a woman ?" This is the measure of my honourable friend's understanding.

My Honourable friend Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali says that he neither opposes nor applauds the Bill. He only wants to know why I have applied the provisions of the Bill to the Sikhs and Jains. Are they sub-sects of the Hindus ? Are also the depressed classes Hindus ? To use his own words, are both the higher classes and the depressed classes to be put under the Hindu religion. This is no occasion to enter into a philosophical examination whether Sikhism and Jainism are parts of Hinduism. But the widows amongst the Sikhs and Jains and the so-called depressed classes are in the same plight as those of the other Hindus and they are suffering under the same disability, and the only way to help them and ameliorate their lot is to include them in the Bill. I hope this will satisfy my Honourable friend.

I now come to the Honourable Sir Lancelot Graham. His speech, I am sorry to have to say, is not free from misrepresentations and wrong inferences drawn from facts. To begin with, he remarked that he thought it right to intervene at an early stage of the debate to state the Government's position, and he then stated it. I question the justification for a Government to intervene at an early stage of the debate on a piece of social legislation, unless the Government support that legislation or have to say that they are neutral. If the Government do not wish to support a measure but wish to be guided in their choice, whether to support or to oppose it, by the knowledge of what support the Bill has got in the House, they must wait till a majority of speakers have spoken in the

Assembly. To intervene early in a debate is to give a lead to the Assembly to oppose a Bill which seeks to remedy a social evil; and Government have no right, I submit, to do so unless it is their intention to help to perpetuate an evil, and they are resolved that the people of India shall not make any social progress, which I think is the foundation of all progress.

My Honourable friend has misstated the policy and attitude of Government towards social legislation. He says that Government would not support any measure unless it is shown that the measure has a very very strong majority of opinion behind it. *Is there any moral sanction for such a policy, I ask?* And has that been hitherto the policy which Government have pursued? Has the policy of the Government not been different? My Honourable friend Sir Hari Singh Gour has, by quoting instance after instance of social legislation undertaken by the Government of India, fully proved that the Government have initiated and supported social legislation that had, according to their view, moral sanction behind it, though those legislative measures were opposed sometimes *almost unanimously* by the people. In order to prove that the Honourable Member who spoke for Government has not presented the attitude of Government rightly, I would quote from a speech of a responsible Member of Government,—the Honourable Sir James Crerar, the Home Member. Speaking on the 4th September, 1929 in the Legislative Assembly when the Hindu Child marriage Bill was on the anvil, he said:

"The real truth, Sir, with regard to the attitude of Government in this matter, as in other matters of social legislation, is one which I think I may state in a few words. It occupies, I frankly admit, a middle course. I suggest, indeed, I most strenuously contend, that in the extreme of rash, hasty and intemperate legislation and the opposite extreme of obscurantism and

purblind conservatism the dangers which lie are hardly distinguishable in their magnitude. What I have always contended for is that, if important projects of social legislation are to be undertaken *as they must be undertaken, it should be after a careful and deliberate examination of the evils which you are endeavouring to correct, and after the fullest ventilation and consultation of public opinion* ; and that in matters of that kind we should make every possible endeavour to ensure that, behind such measures as we undertake, we should have that degree of public support which is in fact essential to the effective administration of any legislation in such matters ?"

Does this enunciation of policy stipulate that a measure to receive support from Government must have an overwhelming majority of opinion behind it and that it is not for Government to consider whether it is a good or a bad measure. The Honourable the Home Member lays down three propositions, that social legislation should be undertaken after a deliberate examination of the evil it seeks to remedy; secondly, public opinion should be consulted, and thirdly there should be reasonable support of public opinion behind it. Has Sir Lancelot Graham not completely ignored the first two conditions when he enunciated his policy and exaggerated out of all recognition the third ? Sir, my Bill proposes a remedy to stop an evil, the existence of which is admitted by the highest authorities in India and not denied by Government. This Bill has been before the public for over two years. Government have circulated the Bill and consulted public opinion about it, and I claim that it has the greater part of the public opinion behind it. Not only is the majority of those consulted by Local Governments in favour of the Bill as now introduced, but the majority of the speakers in the Assembly are in its favour, which fact alone is an index that public opinion in this country supports the Bill. The Bill therefore fulfils the conditions laid down by the Home Member in his Simla speech to be entitled to Government support.

The Honourable the Home Member speaking on the same Bill further said :

"At any rate, Sir, I wish to make my position, the position of Government, perfectly clear beyond any shadow of doubt. It is this. We are convinced that this evil exists ; we are convinced that the measure of Rai Sahib Har Bilas Sarda is, at any rate, a first step in the direction of seeking a practical remedy. Where we find so great an evil and where we find a promising remedy we feel that we must support what we think to be right."

My Honourable friend Sir Lancelot Graham was a little unfair to Mr. Yamin Khan. He said that Mr. Yamin Khan supported the Bill because he was a gentleman and a barrister. He has ignored the reasons given by Mr. Yamin Khan for supporting the Bill. Mr. Yamin Khan had said :

"I have come to know many cases in which the Hindu widows suffered a great deal. I have appeared on their behalf and I found them in the most miserable condition, and I found that a great deal of injustice was done in the name of law and religion."

Furtheron he said :

"I am glad Mr. Sarda supports my views, that those social laws are made for the time being to suit society ...... I have seen a good many widows deprived of their food while they really enjoyed great luxury in the time of their husbands. If it is joint family property, the reversioner or the brother of the deceased does not treat the widow with as much cordiality as is her proper share. It is a pity that a woman, as soon as she loses her husband, loses not only her partner in life but also loses her life of enjoyment, and she becomes dependant on the charity and good will of the relations of the deceased husband.........In many cases they are not treated like human beings."

This is the reason why Mr. Yamin Khan supported the Bill and not because he was a gentleman. Does the Honourable Sir Lancelot Graham mean to say that those who do not support the Bill are not gentlemen ? My Honourable friend further said :

"The debate has been a listless debate and if it is permissible to mention the galleries a singular emptiness in the galleries."

He then compares this state of things with the enthusiasm evoked by the Child Marriage Bill. You can see, Sir, that conditions are now quite different from what they were three years ago. In 1929 there was no upheaval in the land, there was no serious agitation, no grave unrest and the women had only their domestic duties to attend to. But the state of affairs is quite different today. There is an upheaval in the country, the like of which was never seen in the memory of the present generation; unrest is universal. Disaffection stalks in the land, trade is ruined and the jails are filled; taxes are high and the Government exchequer is empty. Is this the time when women will come out or even the men will enthusiastically come forward to support a social measure? But so far as the women are concerned, every Women's Conference in the country held since the introduction of this Bill, has whole-heartedly supported it. The Women's Associations throughout the country have without exception demanded the passing of this Bill. Let me read here a few of the opinions of the Women's Associations in the country. A Calcutta telegram says:

"Whole-hearted support to Mr. Sarda's Bill to establish the right of inheritance by widows was recorded at a meeting held under the joint auspices of all the Indian Women Associations of Bengal at the Mary Carpenter Hall, Mrs. Kamini Roy took the chair. The hall was fully packed and the attendance, besides a large number of Marwari ladies, including Mrs. P. K. Roy, Lady Bose, Mrs. Kalyani Mukherji, etc."

They passed a resolution whole-heartedly supporting this Bill. It would do good to the Honourable Members from Bengal to read the full report published in the *Liberty* (Calcutta) of the 25th February 1930. I will now read a few telegrams which I have received during the last three days. Here is one from Bombay :

"All-India Women's Conference at Madras sessions strongly

supported Hindu Widows Inheritance Bill. Letter follows. Social Secretary, A. I. W. G."

Then from Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi, Madras:

"Women's Indian Association supports Sarda Bill secure widow's share in family property."

Another telegram is from Rani Rajwade of Gwalior, the Organising Secretary of the All-India Women's Conference:

"Sir L. Graham expressed doubts in the Assembly regarding volume of support behind Sarda Hindu Widows' Inheritance Bill. I wish to apprise you of the general support obtaining throughout constituencies of All-India Women's Conference to this measure in view of which conference in annual session Madras strongly protested against existing legal disabilities of Hindu women in respect of personal property and property rights and even demanded appointment of All-India Inquiry Committee in this behalf. Therefore request Government should lend whole-hearted support. Literature follows."

This is a letter from the Conference of Delhi Women, and their resolution is this:

"This conference of Delhi women lends its whole-hearted support to any legislative measure which may be designed to recognise and enforce the right of Hindu women to private property and inheritance."

Then a telegram from that honoured lady, Sharifa Hamid Ali:

"Konkan Women's Conference urges Government not accept amendments Sarda Act. Support Bill securing share Hindu widows. Urges Legislature make provision mothers, sisters, daughters."

Here are the telegrams which I received yesterday:

"Baroda Women's Association heartily supports your Bill."

The Bihar constituency of the All-India Women's Conference wires as follows:

"Women of Bihar assembled in meeting whole-heartedly support Hindu Widows' Inheritance Bill and request Government to support it or at least give freedom of vote to official members."

This is from Madras:

"Madras Constituency All-India Women's Conference request Government support Widows' Inheritance Bill."

This is a copy of a message sent to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy:

"Please convey our message to His Excellency. The women of Amraoti assembled in public meeting whole-heartedly support Hindu Widows' Inheritance Bill and request Government to support it or at least give freedom of vote to official Members. Secretary Berar Women's Conference."

I will now read some of the Resolutions passed by Women's associations. This is from Hyderabad (Sindh):

"This Conference gives its whole-hearted support to R. S. Har Bilas Sarda's "Hindu Widows' Inheritance Rights Bill" to be discussed at the Delhi session of the Assembly and urges the Members of the Central Legislature to help the speedy passage of the Bill and thus ameliorate the lot of the long suffering Hindu widows."

Under the auspices of the local Committee of the All-India Women's Conference a public meeting of women was held at Karachi, at which the following resolution was passed:

"This meeting of women of Karachi strongly supports Rai Sahib Har Bilas Sarda's Hindu Widows' Inheritance Rights Bill to be taken up at the Delhi session of the Assembly."

Another meeting held at Karachi under the presidency of Begum Haji Abdulla Haroon passed this resolution:

"This public meeting of the women of Karachi assembled together as a subconstituent Conference of the All-India Women's Conference strongly support R. S. Har Bilas Sarda's Hindu Widows' Inheritance Rights Bill to be taken up at the Delhi session of the Assembly."

This telegram has just come:

"Representative gathering of seven Women's associations whole-heartedly support your Bill and request Government to

support it or least give freedom of vote to official Members. Wire sent Viceroy. Faridoonji."

This is Mrs. Rustomji Faridoonji, who is Secretary of the Women's Conference and General Secretary of the All-India Women's Education Fund.

I do not know if I should read the twenty or more resolutions passed by different Women's Associations in different provinces, Andhra, Hyderabad, Karachi, Sukkhur, Bombay, Indore, East Punjab, Hoshiarpur, Mysore, Tamil Nadu, etc This telegram is from the Secretay of the Kotah Women's Conference. And they are coming as I am speaking:

"Kotah Women request you to do all you can for Hindu Widows' Inheritance Bill. Wish success."

This is from Mrs. Kitchlew, President of the Gwalior Association:

"Women of Gwalior assembled in public meeting wholeheartedly support Sarda's Hindu Widows' Inheritance Bill and earnestly appeal to Government to support same."

Speaking on the 26th January, the Honourable Sir Lancelot Graham said:

"The Honourable gentleman himself certainly displays his sympathy for the Hindu widow and would like to do something for her. He is not alone in that attitude; we all share it. But the question is whether this is the right method and this the right time, and that is where we join issue with the Honourable the Mover of this Bill."

Lip sympathy all this! Damning with faint praise as they say. What is the right method please, if not this? Will the Honourable gentleman promise to take the right method at once, and I propose to give up this Bill.

The Honourable gentleman again did me less than justice when, speaking of me, he said:

"My Honourable friend said that this little sheaf of opinions

was not as large as it ought to be, and I think he indicated that that is the fault of Government."

Nothing of the kind. I did not say a word of what the Honourable Sir Lancelot Graham represents me as saying, that I was sorry that the sheaf of opinions received was not large, and that more opinions in favour of the Bill should have come. I never said that. All I said was that the Government had not circulated the Bill to the Women's Associations in the country as it should have done, because it is the women who are really affected by this Bill. To interpret this as a regret that the sheaf of opinions was not large is a travesty of facts. I quote my words:

"Of the opinions recorded all are of men or bodies of men except three, two of which are of individual women, and one of a Women's Association. This shows that the circulation of the Bill was unfair and that injustice has been done by Government by not inviting the opinions of the class for which the Bill is intended. The Bill ought to have been circulated to all Women's Associations as well as to the prominent women in the country. Had this been done, there would have been a chorus of approval of the Bill in the country as the entire womanhood of India would have been found in favour of the Bill; this is clear from the unanimous support which all the women consulted have given to the measure. They all heartily support the Bill. The Bill has also received support from one and all the Womens' Associations that have come to know of this Bill."

Then he says: "If people are not interested, you can not make them write opinions to Government about Bills." Is this not a misleading statement? Are not Government to blame if they have not consulted prominent women of India in the matter, especially when women are considered by Government fit to work in the Round Table Conference and on the Committees appointed to supplement the work of that Conference, and are considered fit to go as members of a Commission to the South African Government? If the Bill was not sent to them and they did not send their views to Government, who is at fault? Government alone can

call for opinions. Are then Government to blame or anybody else?

But what will astonish every one and what surprised me most was the conclusion to which the Honourable Member arrived. He said:

"The attitude for which Government stands is that there must be evidence that there is a very strong feeling in the Hindu community before they will lend any support to proposals to interfere radically with the Hindu Law. On those grounds I, on behalf of Government, oppose the motion."

On what process of reasoning, on what canons of logic does the Honourable spokesman for Government rely when he says that because he does not find sufficiently large support from the Hindu community to the Bill, he will not support it and, therefore, *he will oppose it*? Government have sympathy with the object of the Bill; Government do not disapprove of the proposal to give a share to a widow in the family property; Government will only support social legislation if it has the strong support of the people; but as Government do not find strong support they will *actively oppose* it. Is there any reason why you must injure a man because you do not love him? Why cannot Government say that they cannot support the measure and stop there? Why should Government join hands with those who are against all social reform, however useful or necessary and who have no sympathy with widows in their disability? Why cannot Government remain neutral: Why cannot Government say, that, they will not take the responsibility of supporting or opposing it, that they will stand aside and let the non-official Members of the Assembly or those alone who are affected by it decide the issue, and they will allow the Bill to be passed or rejected as that vote decides? In the alternative, if Government are not opposed to all social reform, they can let the Bill go to the Select Committee and then ask for re-circulation of the Bill as it emerges from the

Committee, if it is found necessary to do so and await the verdict of the public. Why must they oppose its being sent to a Select Committee?

Sir, before I sit down I want to say a word or two with regard to what fell from the Honourable the Law Member. The Law Member was not present at the debate on the last occasion and evidently he has been put up by Government now, as what fell from Sir Lancelot Graham was too flimsy to convince the Members of the soundness of the Government's case. We all know what an eminent advocate the Law Member was before he came to the Government of India. We know how cleverly, how skilfully he can put up a case which is lost from the very beginning; how he can "make the worse appear the better reason." The Honourable the Law Member does not say that the object of the Bill is bad. He says the Bill has been so badly drafted, that he does not know what the principle of the Bill is; that he has been searching for it with a microscope but has not been able to find it; and therefore, he says, it cannot go to the Select Committee. He made one or two further observations with which I shall deal later.

Now, Sir, you have to take the principle of the Bill from the provisions of the Bill, from the Statement of Objects and Reasons, and what the author of the Bill says is the principle. A Persian proverb says:—

"*Tasnif ra Musannif niko kunad bayān.*"

which means "The author can best explain what he has written." And when I say what the principle is, and the Statment of Objects and Reasons says what that principle is, that should be taken as the principle of the Bill.

After stating what the legal status of widows is, I stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons that this Bill "proposes to give relief to Hindu widows by

giving them a share in family property and making them sole owners of their deceased husband's personal property". Then in concluding my speech on the 26th January, I said:

"In conclusion, I wish to emphasise that by accepting my motion, the House only accepts the principle of the Bill, which is that the lot of a Hindu widow, who at present neither gets a share in her father's property nor in her husband's, should be ameliorated by giving her some right in the property which belonged to her husband, for her support in her widowed life."

The principle of the Bill is that some share in the property which was her husband's, should be given to her to ameliorate her lot during her widowhood. I further said:

"How much is to be given and in what shape, are matters not vital to the Bill and will be decided by the Select Committee and this Honourable House. It is the business of the Select Committee to improve the draft where necessary and make clear any point that may be obscure, and define the extent and the nature of the right that the Bill gives to the widow...........I appeal to my European and Muslim colleagues, and tell them that this Bill attempts only to give to the Hindu widow only a part of what their own laws already give to widows governed by those laws........."

Then the Honourable the Law Member said that clauses 3 and 5 were in conflict and that the Bill overrode the testamentary right of a Hindu. Now Clause 3 gives a Hindu widow a share in the joint family and defines what the extent of that share would be. Clause 5 says:

"A widow's claim to maintenance from the funds of a joint family shall cease on the *partition and separation* of her share as provided in this Act."

I do not see what the difficulty is. My Honourable friend said it was not clear whether in certain instances she would get both the maintenance and her share. I do not see how that view can be justified in the face of this clause. This clause plainly says that a widow under the present law has a right of maintenance and

she will get maintenance only, until she invokes the new law and gets a partition of the property made and she is put in possession of that property. There is no occasion when both the maintenance and the share which she can get under the proposed law may be given to her.

Take any law and try to analyse it, and you will find that a number of interpretations can be put on its sections. As my friend the leader of my Party said, look into the provisions and the details of any Bill with a microscope, you can never find unanimity of opinion. What is done in the courts? What do our eminent lawyers do? They are there because the words of the law are differently interpreted by different people. It is because the Bills framed by the Legislative Department of the Government of India admit of different interpretations being put on their sections by men of acute intelligence that we have every day battles of wits in courts. Whatever human ingenuity may devise, there will still be differences of opinion with regard to the interpretation of any particular Bill or any particular statement. The reason is that the human mind travels faster, and it goes much further than human language can express; human language can never keep pace with the activity of the human mind.

My Honourable friend laid stress on the words "family property" contained in the proviso to clause 3 of this Bill. The sole object of this proviso is this. If a man dies leaving a widow and leaves instructions to her to adopt a son, and the widow in obedience to her husband's wishes adopts a son, that son shall get half the property left by his adoptive father. The widow shall not remain the owner of the whole of that property; she shall share it with the adopted son. By Family property I mean that part of the property belonging to the undivided Hindu family, which comes to the widow as her share under this Bill.

In conclusion, I wish to say that this Bill affects a very large number of the women of the country. The womanhood of India has become conscious of its position and will no longer suffer indignity and oppression. If the Government will oppose this measure and throw it out, this will not be the last they will hear of it. Reformers will find means to agitate the matter further and in quarters to which the Government will have to listen with respect, *Government can only retard social progress; they cannot stop it, they cannot scotch it, they cannot smother it.* Let this Government not go down to history as a Government that treats with contempt and scoffing the weak and the humble, and bows with deference before the strong. (Applause.)

SPECIAL MARRIAGE BILL[1]

Thou, Nature art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound; wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom?

SHAKESPEARE, *King Lear.*

THE spread of education, the enormous facilities for travel, the ever-increasing intercourse between members of the various Hindu castes, and constant contact with non-Hindus of education and culture, coupled with the great difficulty, and sometimes the impossibility, of finding suitable matches within the circle of the caste, have made the question of marriage a problem of great importance for the Hindus. The emancipation of the intellect and the will from the fetters imposed by prejudice, due to education and contact with the more advanced peoples of the world, as well as the pressure of the conditions of life now obtaining in the country which is no longer an exclusive, self-sufficing and isolated part of the world, make it a matter of increasing difficulty for Hindus to conform to all the prevailing social customs which mostly originated under political, ecconomic and social conditions which have disappeared or are fast disappearing. The Hindu social fabric has undergone such a change during the course of its evolution from the time of Manu and Yagnyavalka, that it is sheer mockery to accept or reject an important social measure solely on the ground that it does or does not conform to the old Hindu Texts.

Leaving aside for the present the law laid down in

[1]From a Speech delivered in the Legislative Assembly, New Delhi, on Sir Hari Singh Gour's Special Marriage Bill on 22nd March 1928, A. D.

the old Texts, but considering the actual practice of marriage amongst the Hindus in ancient times, we find that great freedom was enjoyed by the people in the matter of marriage. I will give three or four historical instances to show how great was the freedom allowed in ancient India in the matter of marriage. We have all read of the well known historic instance of the marriage of the Hindu Emperor Chandragupta with the daughter of the Greek King Seleucus, about 303 B.C., so graphically described by Dr. Vincent Smith. The Junagarh inscription of the year 72 *Śaka* era (A.D. 150) quoted in the *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. VIII, describes the marriage of Rudradāman, a Shak, with the daughter of a Hindu King according to the Swayamvara rite. The Kanehri cave inscription records the marriage, performed about 155 A.D., of Raja Vashishti's son Sātkarni of the Andhra family, with the daughter of the Kshtrapa Rudra, a non-Hindu king.

The sixth century A.D. inscriptions of the cave of Culvada near Ajanta also mention an instance of an intermarriage. The celebrated Atpur inscription of Shaktikumar of 977 A. D. mentions the marriage of Shaktikumar's ancester Allata with Hariyadevi, a Hun princess. It is mentioned there that the princess belonged to the Hun race. History records that the mother of Bappa, the great King of Chitor, was of Mauriya family. The twelfth century inscription of the Kalachuri King Yashkarandeva mentions that Yashkarandeva's father Karandeva had married Avaladevi, a Hun princess. Many other instances of marriages between Hindus and non-Hindus in ancient times can be cited. I cite an instance of a recent date. On the seventeenth of March this year, Miss Miller was married to H. H. the Maharaja Holkar by the *Jagadguru* Sankaracharya according to orthodox Hindu rites, which fact goes to show that marriages between Hindus and non-Hindus are not against the tenets of Hinduism.



HAR BILAS SARDA, 1895 A.D.

THE VAISHA COMMUNITY
OR
THE MIDDLE CLASS OF INDIA[1]

......To thy ownself be true;
And it must follow as the day the night,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

SHAKESPEARE, *Hamlet.*

I must thank you for the honour you have done me in electing me President of the All-India Vaisha Conference this year. Besides doing me honour you have, by electing me to the Chair, called upon me to contribute my humble mite towards the accomplishment of the great work which you took in hand thirty-one years ago, and which is making slow but sure progress in uplifting this great community. While sensible of the honour done to me and thankful for the confidence placed in me, I am not quite insensible of the obligation you have imposed upon me; for, I am not unconscious of the fact that the only qualifications I possess to fill the position to which you have called me, are my deep interest in the welfare of the community to which I have the honour to belong, my pride in its past, my sorrow at its deplorable present, and my firm faith in its prosperous future.

Gentlemen, just as the trunk of the tree is its mainstay in as much as it distributes sustenance to the various branches; and on its strength and healthi-

[1]Presidential address delivered at the All India Vaisha Conference held at Bareilly on 28, December, 1924 A. D.

ness, depends the prosperity of the branches, the leaves and the fruit, so is the Vaisha community the mainstay of a nation. Society has been divided and classified in various ways, in various countries; but the laws and principles governing the life and growth of nations are the same all over the world. In every nation, functions necessary for its life and growth have to be performed; and agencies, varying according to time and circumstances, exist in every nation to conduct those necessary functions. Take the two chief necessities of the life of a nation. First, it must be able to protect itself from foreign attack; secondly, it must produce means and possess resources to maintain agencies not only to insure such protection but to provide sustenance for its continued existence. It is a law of nature that a nation that ceases to grow, begins to decline. Every nation, therefore, must be able to make sufficient provision to meet its progresively increasing needs owing to its growth. This second function so vital to the life of the Indian nation is performed by the Vaisha community.

It is not easy, owing to the innumerable political changes, social and racial upheavals, the rise and fall of various religious sects and denominations during the last three thousand years, to trace the origin and the history of the formation of the numerous castes and sub-castes into which we find the Vaisha community of India at present divided. As we all know, in ancient India there were only four *Varnas*. This classification of the people was the result of the various functions performed and the professions followed by them. Individuals, as they adopted the mode of life and took up the work suited to their temperaments and capacities, were classed as Brahmins, Kshtriyas, Vaishas and Sudras. Men and groups of men, were at liberty to change their *Varna*; and the *Puranas* and *Sastras* show beyond doubt that the various

members of a family and some times, the several sons of the same father belonged to different *Varnas*. At all events, there is no doubt that in those days, the Vaishas formed one undivided class, and were governed by common social rules and regulations, and had common customs and usages. There were then no castes and sub-castes among them, no mutually exclusive sub-communities, which moved in their separate narrow orbits, uninterested in and unconcerned with the lives and fortunes of one another. Later, owing probably to a variety of causes including among others, the spread of those tenets of *āchar* (conduct) preached by the Vaishnava Acharyas resulting in accentuating the disruptive tendencies and helping the disintegrating forces working in Hindu society, and the acceptance by large numbers of people of the doctrines of *Ahinsa* and *Bhakti*, the Vaisha community broke up into a number of separate sub-castes. These sub-castes were formed according as the various professions its members followed, and the localities they inhabited, or as circumstances permitted. The names Khandelwals, Porwals and others ending in *Wals* betray the origin of those communities as Vaishas who came from the towns of Khandela, Pur (Mewar) and other towns respectively. Some like the Maheshwaris and Oswals came into existence when large numbers of people changed their creed. Records show that some Kshtriyas belonging to different clans inhabiting Khandela and its environs adopted the Vaishnava creed of *Bhakti* and *Ahinsa*, gave up their profession of arms, took up peaceful avocations and assumed the name Maheswari "of great *Aishwariya (material prosperity)*." Later, the Rajputs of the town of Osian in Marwar under the influence of the Jain *Acharya* Ratnaprabhusuri, adopted the Jain faith and formed a separate caste. It is a historical fact that certain Maheshwari families such as the Bhandaris, Mehtas, Kotharis later adopted the Jain faith and joined the

Oswal community and were absorbed by it. Similarly, some Oswals of the Mantri family later joined the Maheshwaris. They, however, all retained their patronymic of Bhandari, Mehta, Kothari, Mantri etc. The Agarwals are also said to be Kshtriyas and are descended from the sons of King Agrasen and are so-called as they lived in Agroha a city founded by Agrasen. It appears that most of the classes forming the present Vaisha community of India were orginally Kshtriyas or Rajputs. The work of investigating the origin of the several communities is a most important and interesting one, and if the Vaisha Mahasabha takes it up, it shall be doing a great service to the Vaisha community.

The functions performed by the Vaisha community in ancient times being so vital to the life and growth of the Hindu nation, its members naturally developed moral and physical qualities of a high order. They were men of vigorous constitution, of great courage and valour, clear and bright intelligence, of a daring nature, ready to face danger, cross seas, fight their way in distant and savage countries, and obtain and secure from all parts of the world, things necessary for the welfare and advancement of humanity, useful to man in peace and war, in health and sickness. They were keen to secure, and strong to keep what they had secured. They were self-reliant, resourceful and brave. Such were the ancestors, the progenitors of the various classes in India which are now classed as Vaishas. Even in medieval times, the Vaishas were a most prominent community in India, respected and esteemed by all They were great administrators, and held the highest offices in the State along with the Rajputs as Commanders, Ministers, Ambassadors and Governors. From early times up to the advent of the British in India, they held high positions in the financial administration of the country. In the Indian States,

till very recently, the ministers, adminstrators and governors were generally Vaishas and in some of them even now, ministers are Vaishas. They have been and are now being elbowed out by others where the British influence has become predominent. All the strings of the commerce and trade of India, export and import, were in their hands in old days. They were to be found all over the world, in Europe, Africa and all parts of Asia—in China, Japan, the Transgangetic Peninsula, Arabia, Persia, Babylonia, Greece, Egypt and Rome.

"India" says the *Encyclopædia Brittanica*[1] "was once the seat of commerce." Professor Heeren[2] and others declare that the Hindus in old days were "a commercial people." Professor Max Duncker, Sir W. Jones, Mr. Elphinstone, Mr. Sewell and others say that the "Hindus navigated the ocean more than 2,000 years before Christ."[3] Dr. Sayce, the famous Assyrialogist says that "Indians went to Babylon with[4] merchandise 3,000 years B. C. when Ur Bagas ruled there."[4] It was this commercial activity of the Vaishas, that brought untold wealth to India, and made her for ages famous as the richest country in the world and the cynosure of all eyes. The elder Pliny[5] complained that there was no year in which India did not drain the Roman Empire of a hundered million sesterces (about Rs. 1,50,00,000). He estimated the annual drainage of gold alone at Rs. 4,000,000.

The trade with Egypt, Greece and Arabia was in the hands of the Vaishas of India. Mr. Cloupet[6] says "the commerce of Arabia Felix is entirely in the hands of the *banians* of Gujrat who from father to son have

[1] Vol. XI, P. 446.
[2] Historical Researches, Vol. VI. p. 266.
[3] Elphinstone's History of India, p. 166.
[4] Hibbert Lectures for 1887 A. D.
[5] Pliny : Natural History.
[6] Allgem; Geogr. Ephem for November 1810, p. 235.

established themselves in the country." Periplus,[1] the famous Greek writer, says that "the *banians* (Vaishas) of India established themselves at Socotra and the Cape of Guardafui." Professor Heeren[2] says that "it is a well-known fact that the *banians* were in the habit of traversing the ocean and settling in foreign countries". He adds that "the commercial Hindus made expeditions into the golden desert, Ideste, desert of Cobi in armed companies" that "the *Takhte Sulemān* in Turkistan mentioned by Ptolemy and Ctesias was the starting point for these merchants," and that they (Vaishas) went to Khotan and Asku and thence to Peking.

We thus see that the Vaishas of India used constantly to go to Turkistan, China, Babylon, Arabia, Egypt, Greece and Rome, and remain out of India for years. It was thus that they helped in making India great. It was thus they made India not only the richest and the most prosperous country in the world, but also the mistress of the sea and the foremost maritime power in the ancient world. How fallen we now are that we ex-communicate our young men, who go to foreign countries to receive education and fit themselves to earn a decent living in India. It is being constantly dinned into our ears that we must stick to the customs and usages of our forefathers, that we must not violate them, that we must follow old practices. Are we then following the old practices of our forefathers, are we treading the path they tread when we not only decline to go out of India for trade to enrich ourselves and our country, but outcaste our young men, the pride of our community, the promise of our future, who face difficulties and undergo sufferings that foreign travel entails, and who suffer the privations the troubles, that residence in strange lands involves.

[1] *Hindu Superiority*, p. 374. (Third Edition).
[2] *Historical Researches*, Vol. II.

Not only were the Vaishas of India in old days, men of great enterprise and adventure and pioneers of commerce, but as I have said before, there were amongst them warriors, statesmen and administrators. History records innumerable instances of Vaisha heroism and valour, of Vaisha statesmanship and administrative eminence. In Gujrat, you have the celebrated instances of Vimal Shah, Vastupal and Tejpal, all Porwal Mahajans. Vimalshah was the Prime Minister of the Solanki king Bhimdeva I of Gujrat who ruled from 1022 to 1064 A. D. Under his command, the Gujrat army marched and defeated the Parmar king Dhandhukh of Abu and Chandravati, who fled to the court of the famous King Bhoj of Dhārānagri. He built the great temple at Abu called the Vimalvasahi at an expense of eighteen crores of rupees which would be equivalent to about ninety crores now. It is the finest temple at Abu and one of the finest in the world.

The two brothers Vastupal and Tejpal were great warriors and scholars. They were ministers of Virdhaval, the administrator of Gujrat. Students of history know how Vastupal fought against and reduced to submission the Parmar king Dharavarsh of Abu, the Chauhan king Udai Singh of Jalor and many other smaller Chiefs. He proved himself to be a great Military Commander in the war against Sankh, the Chauhan king of Broach, when the latter attacked Khambhat, of which Vastupal was Governor about 1160 A. D. It is recorded how Vastupal gave up his *Ahinsavrat* and adopted the *Purushvrat*; how he advanced sword in hand, when his lieutenant Bhuvanpal failed to make an impression on the enemy, and fell on the Chauhan army and killed Sankh's famous warrior Jayant in single combat and defeated Sankh. Later, he invaded the Deccan and defeated the Yadav king Singhan. Vastupal also led an army against Cutch and defeated

Bhim Singh of Bhadreshwar in a great battle.

He was a great minister like Chanakya and was the author of the poem "*Nar Narayana.*" He was a great *dāni* (giftgiver). He built numberless *dharmsalas*, temples, *baodis* (wells) and gave *Sadavrata* (free distribution of food). Though himself a Jain, he renovated Vaishnava and Shiva temples too.

Tejpal distinguished himself by courageously volunteering to reduce to submission Guggal, King of Mahikantha, when the generals and Sardars of the Gujrat Court hesitated to take up the challenge thrown by Guggal, who in reply to Virdhaval's remonstrances to behave properly, had sent him a *phial of kājal* and a *Sāri*, emblems of effiminacy. Tejpal marched against *Guggal* with a large army, defeated and captured him and made him put on the *sari* and hang the *phial of kājal* round his neck. He fought many battles for Gujrat, and built the second great temple at Abu and named it Lunavasahi after his son Lunsi.

The lives of Vastupal and Tejpal illustrate two important features of the Vaisha society of the time. The first is that while Tejpal was a Porwal *mahajan*, his second wife Suhadadevi, daughter of Thakur Asa son of Jallan was of the Modh caste. This shows that intermarriages amongst the different Vaisha castes were prevalent in those days. The second important feature is that both Vastupal and Tejpal were sons of Asraj by Kumardevi, a widow whom Asraj had married. The story of this widow remarriage is told in the *Prabandh Chintamani* and other historical works.

Jagdushah of Cutch was another great warrior. He was a merchant prince and had a fleet of ships which carried merchandise to Africa and Arabia. He wanted to build a fort at Bhadreshwar. Raja Peetdeva of Sindh threatened to dismantle it and declared that he would allow the fort to be built only when a donkey would grow horns. Jugdushah defied him and built

his fort. When Peetdeva marched against him, Jagdushah fought with him and defeated him and brought him to see the fort wherein he had put up a gold donkey with horns on his head. When a wide-spread famine occurred in India, Jagdushah supplied Delhi and Gujrat with grain free.

The bravery of Lakhmi Chand and Bagh Chand sons of Karam Chand Bachhawat, Minister of the Maharaja of Bikaner in the time of Akbar, is well-known. When Maharaja Sur Singh by treachery surrounded their residence with an army of 4,000 men, the two brothers, after grinding to dust their valuable jewels, killed their womenfolk and issued forth sword in hand and fell upon the Rajputs, and after performing deeds of valour, went to Heaven.

Sah Dayal Das, the Minister of the great Maharana Raj Singh I of Mewar was a great general. In the war which Aurangzeb waged against Mewar (1679-1681 A. D.) and in which, says Colonel Tod, "the Emperor denuded the very extremes of his Empire to assemble a host which he deemed must prove irresistible" ; when the Mughal armies and generals from Bengal, the Deccan and the distant Cabul were called and led against Mewar–an unconscious tribute to the might and chivalry of that famous kingdom–this valorous Minister and General, to whom the task of defending Mewar in the Southeast had been assigned, assumed the aggressive and performed deeds of valour which shine in the pages of history. Colonel Tod says: "Dayal Shah, the civil Minister, a man of high courage and activity headed another flying column, which ravaged Malwa to the Narbada and the Betwa. Sarangpur, Dewas, Saronj, Mandu, Ujjain and Chanderi were plundered and numerous garrisons put to the sword; and, to use the words of the Chronicle, husbands abandoned their wives and children and whatever could not be carried off was given to the flames. For once they avenged themselves in imitation of the tyrant

(Aurangzeb) even on the religion of their enemies: 'the *Qazees* were bound and shaved and the *Qurans* thrown into the wells.' The Minister was unrelenting and made Malwa a desert and from the fruits of his incursions, repaired the resources of his master. Flushed with success he formed a junction with the heir of Mewar (Jai Singh) and gave battle to Prince Azim near Chitor and obtained a glorious victory, the Mughal Prince being defeated and pursued with great slaughter to Ranthambhor."

Students of the history of Rajputana know how Ratan Chand Bhandari, the *naib* of Maharaja Abhai Singh of Jodhpur (A. D. 1724-1750) Viceroy of Gujrat fought several battles against the Mahrattas and defeated them; how Bhandari Bachhraj led the Marwar forces against Pilaji Gaekwar during the same period; how Mehta Sahib Chand, the Commander of the Jodhpur forces led his army against Ghanerao and conquered it in Maharaja Man Singh's time; how Mehta Gyan Chand fought against and reduced to submission the Shekhawat Rajputs who had plundered Didwana in A. D. 1804; how Mehta Bahadur Mal led a punitive expedition against the Mers of Merwara and subjugated them; how Singhi Jaswantraj, Commander of the Marwar army fought against the Maharaja of Bikaner and conquered Phalodi; how again Nawalmal Mahnot and Mehta Suraj Mal invaded Sirohi and defeated Maharao Udai Bhan and captured his capital; what brave deeds Suraj Mal performed in the battle; how in Maharaja Takht Singh's time Ghanshamji Sarda, the Kamdar of Alniavās led the Thakur's forces for twelve years and was several times wounded.

The lives of the Singhi brothers Indraraj and Dhanraj of Jodhpur are full of interest and inspiration. Indraraj, the chief minister was also the Commander-in-Chief of the Marwar army. How he fought Marwar's battles; how by diplomacy, courage and military skill,

he defeated the designs against his country, of the confederacy formed by Sindhia, the Maharaja of Jaipur and the premier noble of Marwar, Thakur Sawai Singh of Pokaran. Maharaja Man Singh, the king of Marwar eulogised his work in the couplet.

पड़तो घेरो जोधपुर, आयां दल असंभ ।
आभ डिगंतां इंदड़ा, तैं दीयो भुजथंभ ।

(Jodhpur was surrounded: innumerable army of the enemy came: the sky was tottering; thou Indraraj supported it with thy powerful arms). It was this Indraraj who in 1807 A. D. led an army of 20,000 men against Bikaner. Though a Jain by religion he hesitated not to shed blood when that had to be done. During the campaign against Bikaner, the enemy defiled the water of the wells on the march by throwing bones and dead bodies of cows in them. Indraraj would take out the bones and the dead bodies, throw in some Ganges water in the wells, would himself first drink the water and then made his army use it. His brother Dhanraj was Governor of Ajmer when Sindhia's famous general, DeBogine, attacked that city in 1790 A. D. Dhanraj defied DeBoigne and declared that he would never give Ajmer alive. DeBoigne could not take Taragarh, the fortress of Ajmer, and had to move on to Merta. Later, when peace was concluded and Ajmer was ceded to Sindhia, Dhanraj true to his vow, refused to hand over the fortress and prepared to fight. His master, the Maharaja of Jodhpur wrote a letter to him with his own hand asking him not to fight but to hand over the fortress to the Sindhia. Dhanraj not wishing to oppose his master and not willing to give up Ajmer alive, took poison, declaring "over my dead body alone, could a Deccani (Mahratta) enter Ajmer."

I will give you one more instance of Vaisha heroism. The Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah granted the

districts of Pur, Mandal and Mandalgarh to Nawab Ranbaz Khan, the leader of the Mewatis. Ranbaz Khan advanced at the head of the Imperial army to take possession of the districts, which had been forcibly incorporated by the Maharana of Udaipur into his dominions. Maharana Sangram Singh II (1710-1733) prepared to fight and ordered his Sardars to oppose the Nawab. K. Umed Singh of Shahpura, Thakur Jai Singh of Badnor, Maha Singh of Kanod and other Sardars came with their levies. The Rao of Begun sent his contingent under his *kamdar* Kothari Bhim Singh. When the council of war was held, the Rajput Sardars seeing Bhim Singh smiled, and T. Gangadas addressing Bhim Singh said "Kothariji, there is no occasion to weigh *ata* here." Bhim Singh, who was a Mahajan (Vaish), retorted, "I will weigh *ata* with both hands to-morrow, then you will see." The next morning, when the two armies met on the banks of the *Khari* river, the first to appear in the field was Kothari Bhim Singh with swords in both hands. Addressing the Rajputs chieftains he exclaimed, "Come and see how I weigh *ata*." Saying this, he spurred his horse and charged the Imperial army with a vigour and dash that astonished the friend and the foe alike. The Rajputs feeling ashamed that the attack had been opened by a Vaisha, became furious and attacked the enemy, determined not to be outdone by any one. Ranbaz Khan had with him, 5,000 archers famous for their skill in archery. But the charge of the Rajputs led by Kothari Bhim Singh was so furious and sudden that the archers had no time to take out their arrows. Hand to hand fight with swords, daggers and lances took place. Nawab Ranbaz Khan and his brother Nahar Khan were killed, and Dindar Khan and his sons fled wounded to Ajmer. The Mewatis and the Delhi army sustained a disastrous defeat.

You will thus see that there have been great

warriors, statesman, administrators and generals among the Vaishas. The instances of Vaisha heroism here cited are all from the history of Rajputana, with which I have some acquaintance. Doubtless, equally brilli nt illustrations of military valour exist in the history of the United Provinces, the Punjab and other parts of the country.

The most important matter, however, before the community now is clearly to understand the bearings of the situation, investigate the causes of their fall, study the forces working in the country and think out and adopt necessary measures to enable the community to hold its own in the struggle that is going on. If we cannot emulate our forefathers and occupy in the polity of India, the position that they held, we ought at least to be able to occupy a respectable position which the wealth, the intelligence, the industry and the enterprise of our community entitle us to hold. If we consider for a moment the contrast between the position our ancestors held in India, and that which we occupy today, we will find it difficult to hold our heads high. The Vaisha community was the richest in India. The highest offices in the State were held by them. They commanded armies, governed provinces, administered large States, held the trade and commerce of the country in their hands, and were highly respected and esteemed throughout the country and outside of it. And what is the condition of the Vaishas now. They are strangers to the army, and have been elbowed out of all high offices in the country. The import and export trade is in the hands of the Europeans, Parsis and others. The name *Bania* has become a byeword for a weak, spiritless man. As a community, the Vaishas are treated with contempt. Even though the business of the country in distributing commodities is mostly in their hands, and they are the shopkeepers and money-lenders of the nation, yet they are everywhere despised and oppressed:

Whenever a war loan has to be raised, relief work to be organized, subscriptions for anything to be collected, the Vaisha community is asked to open its purse. But all the time they are being treated with contumely. In every town, though the Mahajans, forming the propertied and wealthy class, are made to bear the heaviest burden of taxation, yet they are often left to the mercy of the *goonda*, the plunderer and the incendiary. An officer once declared that he wanted their blood as they were the money-lenders in the country. Does it, not, therefore, behove them to study the situation and find out the causes of this debacle.

Some of the causes lie on the surface. For one thing, there is an absolute want of unity in the community. No community is so disunited and disorganized as the Vaishas. Selfishness, mutual jealousy, pettimindedness are rife amongst them. They are divided and subdivided and held up in watertight compartments, hidebound by customs and usages, which have long lost their usefulness and now only serve to stifle them. Then, they have become so engrossed in making a little money that they have ceased to attend to their physical welfare. Bodily strength and courage are fast disappearing. While their ancestors were great fighters, they run away from a fight. They prefer to loss all, rather than fight for their rights or honour. No community in India is so afraid of death as the Vaishas. Eternal vigilance, says a historian, is the price of liberty. In the same way, readiness to fight in defence of your liberty, honour or property is the price you have to pay if you want to live in safety. As the best label to your luggage is to carry it yourself, so the best protection to your property and to your honour is the ability to protect them yourself. Just as Vastupal gave up the *Ahinsavrat* and took up the *Purushvrat* when occasion arose, they must all cultivate the will to act like men, to kill and be killed, when duty and

honour require it. As Mahatma Gandhi says (*New India* of 18 December 1924). "It is one's duty to kill and be killed, never to desert the post of duty." All customs, usages, practices that militate against their acquiring sufficient strength to protect themselves, must be given up without hesitation. It is their right to enjoy complete freedom, to follow all paths and professions that are honourable; to go to all lands to acquire knowledge and wealth, to carry on trade, to better their prospects; and any thing that obstructs their way should be brushed aside, whether it is old or of a recent date. If they are to live as a community in this world, they must adopt all possible means consistent with the equal right of others to protect their lives and property. They must assiduously cultivate a spirit of co-operation and unity amongst themselves, which is so necessary for their preservation as a community.

Gentlemen you must not look to your individual interests alone, but bear in mind the common good. And you must not lose sight of the fact that in making the Vaisha community, a great and enlightened community, you are laying the foundations of the greatness and prosperity of your country; for, the greatness of a country depends chiefly upon the strength and prosperity of its Vaisha or business and trading classes. Look at England and America. The English are called a nation of shopkeepers. They are true Vaishas. But they are not a helpless, spiritless people. They do not allow any prejudices or practices to come in their way to advancement. You have a most important and useful lesson to learn from them. The whole world knows how the financiers, the big business men, the commercial magnates, the monied classes of England are supreme in the country. They make war and peace. They control the foreign relations of England. They

control the Press and guide public opinion. Practically they govern. You see all this going on before your eyes. And what of their *confreres*, the Vaishas of India. There is none so poor as to do them reverence. No one listens to them because they are disorganized, and take things lying down. Such people are always trodden upon, be they the most indispensable of beings. In Rajputana there is a saying that *he is no man who does not resent a wrong.*

You owe a duty to yourselves, to your community, and to your country. Just as progress is unity, so is duty a unity. If you do your *dharma* properly, you shall have done your duty to yourselves, to your community, and to your country. Remember that *dharma* does not consist only of a daily bath, a visit to a temple, making gifts to priests and to go on pilgrimage to a sacred place, to spend less money than we now do on marriages, and pass resolutions to raise the marriageable age of boys and girls. These are all very good things in themselves, and may be done. But most of these things are not in themselves the ultimate aim and object of the Vaisha community. They are but means to an end. The aim of the Vaisha community as a body must be to retrieve their lost position and regain the power to serve the State which their forefathers possessed. To achieve that, they must acquire physical strength and courage, *the will to do and dare, to die for truth and right.*

If, as we all know it does, child marriage prevents you from having strong bodies and a courageous spirit, child marriage must be abolished. Justice as well as your interest as a community demand that there should not be enforced widowhood. You must therefore stop it. In order to acquire knowledge and experience, to earn money, even to gain a living, you have to go out of India. You should, therefore, encourage foreign travel, and remove all obstacles to it. In order to

ensure a happy home life, to give proper training to children, to guide and control youngmen and keep them straight, the women ought to be educated and made to give up the *Pardah*. You must educate the women and give them freedom. No reform will be permanent, no act fruitful, unless the women take their share in it. According to our *Sastras*, a husband with his wife forms one whole. How then can you succeed in life, how can you achieve anything great, until the whole and not a part only is free. It is my conviction that until the women are brave, you will not be brave ; *until the women are free, you will not be free.* The source of strength and power is woman, and unless the woman fully supports man, man cannot rise. Why were Rajputs great warriors and brave in old days? Because the Rajputnis were brave and spirited. Remember that *slaves cannot give birth to freemen.* Hindu ladies are the greatest asset the Hindus society possesses. Mrs. Ramsay Macdonald, the wife of the late Prime Minister of England, declared after a tour in India, that the women of India had a higher sense of honour than the men.

You must not waste much time on *kachi* (*baked*) *and pakki* (*fried*), and as to who should cook your food. You must resolve firmly to do all in your power to retrieve your lost position, power and prestige, and with that aim constantly before your minds, you must work strenuously and unceasingly. You must never lose sight of the fact that social reform is only a means to an end and not an end in itself. You must have social reform to remove the obstacles lying in your way to achieve success in your efforts to regain your lost position for the good of your country. you must always be ready to co-operate with all communities, Hindu as well as non-Hindu, for the good of all. But the truth is that co-operation with non-Hindus is possible and useful only when you are able to stand on your feet and are yourselves able to

achieve your salvation. And in order to attain to that position, you must support with your full strength the Hindu Sanghatan movement.

Thomas Carlyle says that you must first do the duty that lies nearest you. And in order that your efforts bear fruit, you must start with what you can do at once. I would therefore suggest, for your consideration, certain practical measures to be taken at once. They are:—

(1) To send regular invitations to the *Panchayats* of the various Vaisha sub-communities of important places, asking them to send delegates to the Vaisha Conference and thus interest the *Panchayats* in the work of social reform.

(2) To support wholeheartedly the Hindu Sanghatan movement, which is not only most useful for the consolidation and preservation of the Hindu race, but is necessary for the protection and advancement of the Vaisha community.

(3) To encourage interdining and intermarriage amongst the various Vaisha sub-communities.

(4) To take steps to collect accounts of great and good deeds of Vaishas of all communities in all parts of India, and publish them in book form, and make the book available to every Vaisha, and to place it in the hands of every Vaisha pupil studying in a public school.

(5) To establish connection between the All-India Vaisha Mahasabha and the Mahasabhas of all sub-communities such as Agarwals, Maheshwaris, Khandelwals, Porwals, Oswals, etc., and invite the representatives of such Mahasabhas to take part in the meetings of the Vaisha Mahasabha.

(6) To start Vaisha Sabhas in all important towns.

(7) To help Vaisha youngmen who wish to go to foreign countries to receive education.

(8) To award medals every year to such Vaisha youngmen as have done brave deeds during the year or have served the Hindu community by acts of courage.

(9) To secure co-ordination of efforts of the various Vaisha sub-communities for social welfare such as opening Schools, Orphanages, Boarding Houses, Libraries or other institutions to encourage education, and instituting Lectureships, Updeshakships.

(10) To have a Press of our own and to invite the owners and the editors of all organs of the Vaisha community to the meetings of the Conference.

(11) To take steps to protect and provide maintenance for Vaisha widows. Our honour, no less than our interest, demands this.

PART II

TRIBUTES AND APPRECIATIONS.





SWAMI DAYANAND SARASWATI

DAYANAND SARASWATI[1]

A frame of adamant, a soul of fire;
No dangers fright him, no labours tire.

"GREAT MEN are the fire-pillars in this dark pilgrimage of mankind; they stand as heavenly Signs, ever-living witnesses of what has been, prophetic tokens of what still may be, the revealed, embodied possibilities of human nature."—Thomas Carlyle.

Great men are pillars of light to light up the path of man in this life; their lives and their work serve as guides to men to enable them to traverse the passage of life in this world in safety and peace. They are the divine and never-failing embodiments of knowledge of the good that there was in the Past, and they reveal in an unmistakable manner what mankind in future may be, and to what height of greatness every man may rise. Great men are the living illustrations of the noble elevation to which humanity will eventually rise in the future.

A Great Man, is an unfailing guide of mankind and embodies in himself the nobility and perfection of human nature. Dayanand Saraswati was, in this sense of the term, a perfect example of a great man.

"Great men seem to be part of the Infinite, brothers of the Seas and the Mountains," says Colonel Ingersoll, the greatest of the American orators. Humanity

[1]Introduction to the *Dayanand Commemoration Volume* published at Ajmer in October, 1933 A. D.

is infinite. Great men, possessing in a greater measure the qualities that distinguish man from animals, help us to realise infinity in their greatness. As the skies, the seas and the mountains transcend our physical vision and appear to us to have no end, so do great men transcend our mental vision and their proportions fade into infinity. The seas and the mountains determine on the physical plane, the settlement of people, the growth of cities and towns, and the flow of trade; so do great men elevate the moral and spiritual life of men, and bring into being ideas and forces, that control and regulate in a great measure, the ordinary day to day life of peoples, and permanently affect their out-look and their ideals. The influence of great men is lasting, as is the influence of the seas and the mountains.

Great men are not all fashioned after one pattern. Every one has an individuality of his own. There is no single standard by which to measure them all. No one in this world can remain uninfluenced by the environment in which he grows up; and the environment never being the same, different people develop different qualities and in different measures.

One generally accepted standard used in judging great men, however, is the good they have done to the world, the extent to which they have helped the masses, the level of happiness and prosperity to which they have raised mankind, the intellectual and spiritual advancement of the peoples of the world they have brought about. It is this standard that reminds one of the dictum that great men are part of the infinite.

Sri Rama Chandra, Bhishma, Sagara, Asoka, Samudragupta, Vikramaditya, Harsha, Alexander, Cæsar, Akbar, Charlemagne, Napolean were all great men, each in his own way. Great poets like Valmiki, Kalidas, Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare, Goethe; philosophers and thinkers like Vyas, Gautama, Kanāda, Sankarāchārya, Plato, Aristotle, Kant,

Herbert Spencer have brought much light and joy to the world and have helped in raising the intellectual and spiritual level of mankind, and added to their happiness and contentment. Patriots like Pratap, Sivaji, William Tell, Mazzini, Garibaldi, Robert Bruce, Kamal Pasha have served humanity through their own countries, raised the moral level of mankind and have established landmarks which are a never-failing source of strength and inspiration to men in every country and clime. Greater than all these, however, are men, who having known Truth and received the light not vouch safed to ordinary men, love mankind; who, burning with the desire to promote human welfare, themselves lead lives of absolute purity and self-denial, and devote themselves to revealing fundamental truths of life, forgotten or long hidden; who hold aloft high ideals of conduct for people to follow, and ceaselessly work to lighten their burdens and to remove the injustices, the sufferings, the sorrows of the world by banishing ignorance, and guiding them towards truth, light and happiness. While heroes extort admiration and furnish inspiration; poets, thinkers and philosophers win gratitude and affection; mankind offer their reverence, love, homage and adoration to the Regenerators of people like Krishna, Buddha and Jesus. Dayanand Saraswati belonged to this small number of the Elect.

These men represent the highest and the noblest in humanity; they have reached the summit of human glory and greatness.

THE VEDAS

According to Hindu belief, when God created man, he revealed the Vedas for his guidance. The Vedas radiated the light that illumined the world by teaching those eternal truths and principles that help us to realise the nature and the co-relation

of God and man—of *Parmātmā, Atmā and Prakriti*—of Humanity and Divinity.

Professor Max Muller says:— "In the history of the world, the Vedas fill a gap which no literary work in any other language could fill." Guigault says:—"The Rigveda is the most sublime conception of the great high-ways of humanity." 'Mons Leon Delbos says:—"There is no monument of Greece or Rome more precious than the Rig Veda." When the Yajur Veda was presented to Voltaire, he expressed his belief that "the Veda was the most precious gift for which the West had ever been indebted to the East."

Sriyut Aurovindo Ghosh, one of the great living Indians, says:—"The ancient civilization did possess secrets of science, some of which modern knowledge has recovered, extended and made rich and precise, but others are even now not recovered. There is then nothing fantastic in Dayanand's idea that the Veda contains truth of science as well as truth of religion. I will even add my own conviction that the Veda contains truths of science, the modern world does not at all possess, and in that case Dayanand has rather *understated* than overstated the depth and range of the Vedic wisdom.

"In the matter of Vedic interpretation, I am convinced that whatever may be the final complete interpretation, Dayanand will be honoured as the first discoverer of the right clues. Amidst the chaos and obscurity of old ignorance and age-long misunderstanding, his was the eye of direct vision that pierced to the truth and fastened on that which was essential. He has found the key of doors that time had closed, and rent asunder the seals of the imprisoned fountain. The essential is that he seized justly on the Vedas as the Indian rock of ages and had the daring conception to build on what his penetrating glance perceived in

it a whole nationhood. Ram Mohan Roy, that great soul and puissant worker, who laid his hand on Bengal and shook her out of her long indolent sleep by her rivers and her rice fields, stopped short at the Upanishads. Dayanand looked beyond and perceived that our true or original seed was the Vedas. He had the national instinct and he was able to make it luminous—an intuition in place of an instinct. Therefore the works that derive from him, however they depart from received traditions, must needs be profoundly national..............If the character given by the Vedic Rishis to their goals is admitted, we are bound whenever the hymns speak of Agni or some other god, to see behind that name what was present always to the thought of the Rishi, the One Supreme Deity, or else one of His powers with its attendant qualities and attributes. Immediately the whole character of the Vedas is fixed in the sense, Dayanand gave to it, the merely ritual, mythological and polytheistic interpretation of Sāyanāchārya collapses, the naturalistic and historical interpretation of Europeans also vanishes. We have instead a real scripture, one of the world's sacred books and the divine word of a lofty and noble religion."

THE HINDU RACE

The Indians were thus the original teachers and leaders of mankind. They gave civilization and religion to the world; and their country, Aryavarta (now called India) became the sacred land of civilized humanity. The Aryas carried *dharma*, truth and enlightenment to the remotest corners of the world, all over Asia, Europe, Africa and America. With the lapse of time, after reaching the highest meridian of earthly prosperity, decline set in amongst them, and gradually, they lost the knowledge of the Vedas and the sciences based on their teachings. They forgot

the *Dharma* their forefathers had taught the world. Their spiritual light, their moral grandeur, their physical prowess and their purity of life deteriorated, till those eternal truths of Being that underlie true *Dharma*, fell in danger of disappearing. The knowledge of Sanskrit (देव वाणी) declined; true *Dharma* became rare. And the term *Arya*, once a term which connoted nobility, culture and greatness, gave place to "Hindu" which with the progress of time became synonymous with "the weak and the feeble."

The people who taught higher philosophy and science to the Greeks and the Egyptians, and religion to the whole world, fell a victim to foreign invaders inferior to them in civilization, culture and refinement. So great was the fall that even a correct copy of the Vedas—the most precious heritage bequeathed by the Rishis to mankind—was not easily available in India. The Hindu nation became a byword for an inefficient, helpless and subject people.

The people that first preached to the world the brotherhood of man and the unity of mankind became hopelessly divided into innumerable castes—watertight compartments. They even began to regard it a sin for a member of one caste to marry into another caste, to take food cooked by a member of another caste, even to dine with him. Nay, in some parts of this sacred land, they even now regard it a pollution to be within a certain distance of a member of certain castes. Owing to this ignorant, narrow, exclusive and iron-bound caste system resulting in disunity, the country, fell a prey to the greed, oppression and domination of backward but virile tribes, who, from time to time invaded the hospitable, fertile and rich land of India from the West or the North West. The people who had reached the summit of spritual glory, and the pinnacle of worldly prosperity, who carried their messages of peace, good-will,

enlightenment and happiness to every part of the world; who taught arts and sciences to the ignorant and unenlightened nations of both the hemispheres, who were justly celebrated as the greatest, the richest, and the wisest people on earth, were found in the beginning of the nineteenth century A. D., hopelessly divided, weak and ignorant, strangers to their sublime language and their superb literature, unable to defend themselves against foreign invasion; unable to protect their arts and sciences, their noble Culture, their magnificent civilization and their divine religion. Such was the state of affairs in this land when Swami Dayanand Saraswati was born in Vikrama Samvat 1881 (A. D. 1824-25).

The Hindu Sastras inculcate that truth reasserts itself, that when the salvation of mankind is in jeopardy, a great soul appears and leads men again towards those eternal springs which give life and vigour.

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥ ७ ॥
परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे ॥ ८ ॥ (गीता अ० ४)

This *sloka* of the *Gita* merely gives expression to the eternal truth that whenever the eternal truths of life are in danger of disappearance, whenever the race through which these truths were revealed to mankind is in danger of forgetting them, the Divine Mercy begins to operate and a great soul appears to re-unfold those truths and teach people anew the true faith that leads to life and happiness.

Dayanand saw the world steeped in ignorance and superstition, torn asunder by prejudice and selfishness, and without light to guide the path of man and of nations to salvation. Life-long study and contempla-

tion based on careful observation drove him to the conclusion that the prime cause of degeneration was the neglect of those eternal truths taught in the Vedas, which govern humanity and which, properly understood and practised, will elevate mankind and bring prosperity and happiness to the world. He determined to revive their study.

Finding also that the evils that ate into the vitals of Hindu society were multifarious and manifold, he resolved to tackle them all; and in order to throw the light of Vedic teachings on all important matters that concerned the life of the people—religious, social and economic—he began to write books containing those teachings, all in Hindi, for the use and benefit of all classes of society—for the Hindus as well as the non-Hindus. He travelled all over the country, spreading the light of truth wherever he went, preaching Vedic religion and ideals, giving public lectures, holding private discourses and friendly discussions with Christian missionaries, Muslim *Maulvis* and the protagonists of other religions as well as with the learned Brahmins.

He knew that the Brahmins, who are the law-givers of India, accept without question, the supreme authority of the Vedas in all things and at all times—they hold that the Vedas, being divine wisdom, override all Śastras and none may question their authority. As Aurovindo Ghosh says:—"Even, when the Vedas were no longer understood, even when their traditions were lost behind Pauranic forms, they were still held in honour, though without knowledge, as authoritative revelation and inspired Book of Knowledge, the source of all sanctions and standard of all truth." He therefore decided that the best way to redeem his people was to teach them what the Vedas contained. He resolved to show them that the Vedas, the Revelation, the

source of Hindu religion and its highest authority, did not support superstition, idolatry, class privilege, sex and caste disqualifications, pernicious customs, emasculating and degrading practices that had reduced the Hindu nation to a state of helpless decrepitude and weakness.

DAYANAND, A WORLD-TEACHER

Swami Dayanand Saraswati was not a mere Reformer. He was a World Teacher. His mission was to uplift all mankind. Some people, while fully admitting Dayanand's greatness and the great work he did for the Hindus, while also appreciating that his teachings would help to uplift mankind, find it difficult to reconcile their idea of his great and noble aim with his exposure and criticism of the doctrines and practices prevalent in Islam and Christianity and other religions. They think that the great man that he was, that his aim being the progress and unity of human race, he should not have denounced the religious beliefs or condemned the practices followed by the followers of those faiths. They approve of his denunciation of idol-worship, the caste system, untouchability, child marriage, enforced widowhood, class privilege—evils prevalent amongst the Hindus. They do not mind the unrest and the disturbance he created amongst the Hindus by his ceaseless campaign against the evils that rent Hindu society asunder; but they would not, dare not, expose or condemn the falsehoods and the evils prevalent in Islamic or Christian society. A highly placed Englishman, while expressing his admiration for his noble character and the great work Swamiji had done, said to me that great men like him should not condemn or denounce the beliefs and practices of the followers of other religions.

Those who hold such opinions, judge of the

greatness of others by their own smallness. They fail to understand Dayanand's aim, his character or the work he had set before himself. They betray their ignorance of his mission. They fail to comprehend the real greatness, the high nobility of purpose which inspired his work. They only look upon him as a *Hindu* Reformer, as one whose work was to purge Hindu Society of what they think are the evils and falsehoods in Hinduism. They only see a part of the man, not the whole of him. They fail to see that he was not a mere Hindu Reformer, but a lover of Humanity, a World Redeemer. His mission was to purge human society—not Hindu Society only—of the evils from which it suffered owing to wrong beliefs, whether those beliefs and doctrines were inculcated by Hinduism or Christianity or Islam. He made no difference between faith and faith. He was a World Teacher and his task was to uplift mankind, whether it lived in India and followed Hinduism, or in Persia or Arabia and followed Islam, or in Europe and America and followed Christianity. He loved all mankind, and his aim was to save from degradation and falsehood all men whether they lived in this country or that, or followed this faith or that. He says in the *Satyarth Prakash* :—" Though I was born in Aryavarta (India) and still live in it; yet just as I do not defend the falsehoods of the religions prevailing in this country but expose them fully; in like manner I deal with the religions of other countries and their supporters *I treat the foreigners in the same way as my own countrymen so far as the elevation of the human race is concerned.* It behoves all men to act likewise."

This declaration of his, clearly shows that when he criticised Hinduism or Islam or Christianity, it was not in a carping spirit, not as an antagonist, but in a spirit of love and philanthropy. A father anxious

to secure the happiness and prosperity of all his sons who have gone astray does not confine himself to guiding and warning the eldest son, leaving the others to their fate; but loving all of them, points out to them all, the wrong paths they had taken, warns them all against the evils they suffer from; shows them all, the right path they should follow. So did Dayanand. His aim was not to save Hindus only; he looked upon Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Zoarastrians, all as his kith and kin, all as his sons; and as he loved them all, he could not but point out the falsehoods and the evils of the various faiths they followed. He would not have been the World Redeemer that he was, had he not done so.

DAYANAND, A PRODUCT OF PURE HINDUISM

A remarkable thing about Dayanand Saraswati is that he and his teachings are the products solely of Hindu Śastras and Hindu culture. Foreign culture, Western civilization had not the slightest influence in making him what he was. He did not know English and was in no way influenced by European culture or European thought.

English-educated people in India began to condemn idolatry, class privilege, caste system, evil customs and practices like the child marriage and enforced widowhood, in consequence of the English education they had received. And because they thought that these practices constituted Hinduism, they began to reject Hinduism too. Dayanand without receiving any Western education or coming under Western influence, by a study of the real Hindu Śastras found that these prăctices were against the teachings of Hindu Śastras and therefore rejected them. He shewed that the Vedic religion (true Hinduism) was free from all these evils that now go under the name of Hinduism.

HIS DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

A study of Dayanand's life and work brings out prominently his three distinguishing features. They are :—

1. Love of truth and absolute rejection of untruth.
2. The dedication of his life to the service of mankind. He set to work to free India from untruth, superstition, and the worship of false gods in all matters, religious, social, economic and political, and *through India*, the whole human race.
3. His love of mankind.

LOVE OF TRUTH

From his childhood he was a Seeker after Truth. His descriminating mind accepted truth as soon as he found it and instantly rejected untruth. Born in a rich, high class Brahmin family in a town which has since been identified as Tankārā in the Morvi State in Kathiawar, when only eight years old, Mulshankar, for such was the name given to him by his parents, was invested with the sacred thread which marks the initiation of a child into Brahmacharya—a life of celebacy, purity, acquisition of knowledge and search after truth.

During a vigil at night, on the Shivrātri day, in a temple of Siva, he saw mice play on the idol and eat the food placed before it, which he had been taught to worship as God. The truth flashed on his mind that the idol which was unable to prevent mice from running about on it and eating up its food, could not be God, who is the Creator and all powerful Ruler of the world. He woke up his father, who had fallen asleep during the vigil, and asked him to explain the phenomenon he had witnessed. The father's attempt to explain away

the occurence proved futile and Dayanand lost faith in idol-worship.

Dayanand Saraswati had an insatiable appetite for knowledge as he was determined to know the truth in every matter—the real substance of things. He was not only a most diligent student, but had expressed his determination to devote his life to acquisition of knowledge, and to go for study to Benares, the chief seat of Sanskrit learning in India. Finding his parents resolved to prevent this by forcing him to enter into wedlock, he made up his mind to flee from the uncongenial atmosphere which stifled truth. He took the earliest opportunity to leave the environment where life moved in a narrow, false and artificial circle. He left home and his parents, and began to prepare himself for a life of service to truth, service to his country and service to humanity. He went wherever he could find a teacher to impart him knowledge. He spent a number of years going from place to place regardless of bodily discomforts, gladly suffering hardships and privations, leading a life of strenuous, unceasing toil and wholeheartedly devoted himself to the study of ancient Sanskrit learning. He went to Mount Abu, the Satpura Hills, to the distant Himalayas, explored hermitages, lonely caves, and mountain retreats in search of sages, teachers of truth, *yogis* and Mahatmas who would initiate him into the realms of the highest knowledge which man can acquire in order that he may become fully fitted to lead a life devoted to the service of Humanity. He underwent strict discipline, led a life of true Brahmacharya to find the Truth. He found it at last in Muttra, where he became a disciple of Swami Virjanand Saraswati, from whom he acquired perfect proficiency in Sanskrit learning, in order to be able to hold his own against the most learned in the

land, whose opposition he was sure to encounter in his campaign against untruth.

Dayanand early realised that untruth leads to error and sin, and entails sorrow and suffering. He also realised that the world was full of sorrow and suffering because it had accepted untruth, and that it could be saved only by bringing it back to the citadel of truth. He went to Benares, stormed the chief citadel of prejudice and privilege and demolished it. He challenged the most learned of the Pandits there to accept truth, and give up untruth and superstition. He told them that the Vedas, the Revelation, the sole authority on religion, condemned idol-worship, caste by birth, child marriage and untouchability, that the Vedas taught pure monotheism, equality of man and the sexes, and challanged them to prove the contrary. The Pandits failed to do so: orthodoxy was beaten in its own stronghold. Vested interests, class privileges and life-long habits and beliefs, but chiefly caste bondage, stood in the way of mankind and it was the birth-right of every person to read them and act according to their teachings. He therefore took up the work of translating them into Hindi—the *lingua franca* of India—the *lingua Indica*—so that every one may have access to them and understand them. Dayanand believed that the acceptance of the Vedas and acting according to their teachings will bring salvation to mankind; and he set to work to achieve that object. He took to propagating the truth as taught by the Vedas by lectures, discourses, debates, discussions, conversations, and by writing books, and pamphlets. He went round the country taking the banner of Truth to every important town in India where Hindi was understood, every sacred place where large masses of people gather together to perform religious ceremonies, celebrate festivals and to bathe in the sacred waters

of the Ganges, the Jumna, the Narbada, the Tapti, e.g. the *Kumbha* at Hardwar, the *Ardha Kumbhis* at Allahabad and Ujjain. He visited every place of pilgrimage, small or great, Pushkar, Benares, Gaya, Muttra, Ajodhia, Allahabad, Nasik, Badrinarain etc. He had no headquarters, no place to go to, for rest or recuperation. Day and night, night and day, he devoted himself to the service of the people writing, preaching, debating, advising, counselling.

Not content to do what he would be able to accomplish during his own life, which he foresaw would not be long, and convinced that it was necessary to carry the message of Truth to all countries of the world, he created a Trust—the Paropkarini Sabha—and appointed 23 Trustees to continue his work after him and carry the Banner of Truth to every country in the world, in Europe, America and Asia, and thus free men from superstitions, falsehoods and shackles of all kinds. He enjoined upon the trustees the duty

(1) To propagate and spread the knowledge of the *Vedas* and the *Vedāngas*, i. e. to say, to expound them and get them expounded, to read and hear them read, to recite and get them recited, and to publish them.

(2) To establish Missions and send misionaries to all countries of the world to teach men the Vedic Faith, and to preach that Truth should be accepted and Untruth rejected.

(3) To give protection and right education to the orphans and the poor people of India.

LOVE OF MANKIND

The philosopher Helvetius says:—"Don't expect too much from men if you would love mankind." Dayanand knew that the evil in the world was due to ignorance, want of knowledge of Truth. As his

heart was full of love for mankind, he had only pity for the wrong-doing, even the wickedness of men. He denounced untruth, often in strong terms, but had no hatred for any one, not even for the wrong-doer, the criminal and the wicked. The infinite love and compassion that filled his heart left no room there for feelings of recrimination or revenge.

Several incidents in his life illustrate how a wrong committed by a person against him instead of exciting hatred or anger invoked pity and compassion in him. Once when he was in Anupshahar (U. P.) carrying on his crusade against untruth, a Brahmin, enraged by Swamiji's denunciation of idol-worship resolved to kill him, and gave him poison in a *pān* (betel leaf). Swamiji came to know of it in time, and saved himself by performing a *yogic* act, *Neoli Kriya*. He, however, said nothing to the man. Somehow or other the news of this reached the ears of the Tahsildar and Magistrate of the place, Sayad Muhammad, who arrested and imprisoned the Brahmin. Thinking that Swamiji would appreciate his action, he went to Swamiji to inform him of it. The Swami would not speak to him. The Tahsildar was surprised and asked him the reason of it. Swamiji said to him "I have not come to this world to imprison people, but to free them from shackles. If men do not give up evil-doing why should we leave our nobleness and higher purpose." Swamiji then got the culprit released.

When we think of Dayanand Saraswati, we see the sublime spectacle of a superman, who, knowing the Truth, and also knowing that the world is full of sorrow because it has left the path of Truth, stands before it with a heart full of pity and compassion for erring mankind; with no resources except his own dominant intellect, his superb courage and

his indomitable will; with only a piece of cloth round his loins and a stick in his hand; convinced that it was his duty to save mankind and determined to do so; conscious that he possessed the strength to free it from falsehood, superstition and sin which had taken a firm hold of it and were dragging it lower and lower down the slough of despondency and degradation.

DAYANAND'S PLACE IN HISTORY

It is not possible at the present time to assign Swami Dayanand Saraswati his true place in History. We are too near him yet to get a full view of his proportions. True perspective is wanting. If you stand at the foot of a mountain, or fifty yards away from it you can only say that it is a great big thing, but you cannot say where it stands in the grade of mountains. You must stand at a great distance from a mountain and be able to get a comprehensive view of its length and height, of the space it occupies in the landscape as compared with the others, before you can give it its rank amongst the mountains of the world. So with great men. A century or two must pass before even the best informed can form a tolerably clear idea of a great man's proportions. You have to wait till the forces generated and set to work by a great personality have fully developed and adjusted themselves not only to the forces at work when that personality appeared on the horizon, but have also met and come to some adjustment with the reactions to the disturbing forces brought into being by that great man. You have to wait till this is done; for it is then that you can get a true perspective of the man and can assign him his true place amongst great personalities.

Dayanand, as stated before, was one of the great teachers and redeemers of the world like Krishna, Buddha and Jesus. Time, however, is not yet for

assigning Dayanand his true place among them. Could any one, fifty years after Buddha's death, or the Crucification of Christ, declare the position Buddha or Christ was to occupy in history ? Could any one even so late as the conversion of Emperor Asoka have assigned Buddha the place he now occupies in human history; or even a thousand years after his death assign Jesus the position he now holds amongst mankind ? It took centuries to bring to fruition the seeds sewn by them. It was several centuries before Buddha and Jesus were recognised as great benefactors of mankind. As a matter of History, within fifty years of their deaths no one assigned to Buddha or Jesus even that position amongst men, which, according to the informed people all over the world, Dayanand occupies to-day. And if the logic of things and human experience are any guide, there is no doubt that a couple of centuries hence, the world will accept Dayanand as as great a benefactor of mankind as Jesus or Buddha.

The heart of Jesus like that of Dayanand was full of pity for the sufferings of men. Intellectually, however, Dayanand was far superior to him. Dayanand was a profound scholar. His supreme place in the field of knowledge of Vedic Literature was undisputed and unquestioned. Both Jesus and Dayanand tried to redeem the people. Both loved them and served them. Both had to give up their lives at the altar of the service of humanity. *Jesus was crucified : Dayanand was poisoned.*

Buddha, one of the noblest of men, is nearer Dayanand than Jesus. Both spent a large part of their lives in search of truth, and at last finding it, gave up the rest of their lives to proclaiming it and making it accessible to all. Both were equally pure in their lives, and gave up the world to serve mankind. Both loved Humanity and were full of pity and compassion for

the failings, the foibles, the follies, the fatalities of men. Both were incarnations of mercy and forgiveness. Buddha's mission, born as he was in the India of the sixth century B. C., was to do away with superstition, ritualism run riot, and to teach men simplicity and brotherhood. Dayanand declared that he had come to the world to break the chains of slavery, and free mankind from error, superstition, ignorance, domination of all kinds, ecclesiastical, social, economic. Dayanand was equipped for the purpose with a cultivated intellect of the highest order, and knowledge of the Vedic literature, unrivalled and supreme. In this, Dayanand had an advantage over Buddha. Then, Buddha had only to deal with the Brahmin priesthood: Dayanand had to meet and overcome not only the Brahmin orthodoxy but the prejudices and errors of the votaries of Islam, Christianity, Jainism, Sikhism and others.

Both Buddha and Dayanand were products of pure unadulterated Hindu culture and Hindu thought, and owed nothing to alien civilizations. cultures or religions In Buddha's time, little of the world outside India was known: Dayanand had a pretty clear idea of the great world outside India. Buddha found his people politically independent but suffering from excessive ritualism and presumption, and given to excessive self-indulgence. Dayanand found his people weaklings, steeped in ignorance and superstition, helpless and degraded, bound hand and foot, slaves politically, economically and socially. He had, a harder task to perform to redeem them and, through them, the rest of mankind. Yet he has sown the seed which will bear the fruit of World Redemption. Time will prove that he was one of the greatest benefactors of humanity—true Redeemer and Deliverer, true Regenerator of mankind.

ASOKA THE GREAT[1]

His life was gentle; and the elements
So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, "This was a man!"

SHAKESPEARE, *Julius Cæsar.*

EMPEROR Asoka is a landmark in human history. He was a personality that defies time, extorts admiration, inspires reverence, and disarms criticism. If ever there was a *Rājarishi*, he was one Amongst the rulers of the world, he stands supreme—unapproachable in moral grandeur, unequalled in spiritual splendour. He towers high above the greatest of the rulers whether in the East or in the West—not, however, as a warrior, not as a great captain leading countless numbers to destroy kingdoms, enslave nations and impose his will on peoples. Alexander, Cæsar, Napoleon stand foremost amongst the military leaders of men. Vikramaditya, Samudragupta, Akbar, Charlemagne, Constantine, are some of the shining lights amongst the political rulers of men. Asoka was greater than these as a ruler, greater than Alexander and Napoleon as a conqueror. Their empires vanished as soon as their eyes were closed: their influence disappeared soon after they started on the journey from which no traveller returns. Asoka's conquests still abide.

[1]A review of Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar's *Asoka* published in the *Hindustan Review*, Patna.

A study of Asoka's life-work is of perennial interest to mankind. Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar has done a service to the country by taking the great Emperor as the subject of his Carmichael Lectures in the Calcutta University and publishing the result of his labours in book-form. He has not only pieced together the various items of information yielded by the famous inscriptions left by Asoka, compared them with the traditions handed down to history, but has tried to show by an analysis of the inscriptions what further information may be obtained from them by a careful and informed scholar.

Asoka was the grandson of Chandragupta, (called Sandracottas by the Greeks), the founder of the Maurya Empire. In old times, Indian Kings had more than one name, one being their proper name and the other *birudas*; and Asoka is styled in his inscriptions *Devanam priyadarsin* (Beloved of the gods) *Raja* or *priyadarsin Raja*. Little is known of his early life beyond the facts that he was Viceroy of Taxila before he became king, that he ascended the throne of Pataliputra (Patna) on the death of his father Bindusara, probably in 279, B. C. (273 B. C. according to Dr. Vincent Smith), that he had several brothers and sisters, two queens, one named Karuvaki, and at least four sons. In his early life he was fond of the chase. The earliest event of his reign mentioned in the inscriptions is his conquest of Kalinga (B. C. 261 according to Dr. Vincent Smith). His description of the horrors of war is vivid. He says that in the war against Kalinga 1,50,000 men were carried away as captives; 1,00,000 were slain, and many times as many died. The horrors of the war impressed him so strongly that he never forgot them and never ceased to regret them.

EXTENT OF ASOKA'S EMPIRE

Asoka's empire included the whole of India (except

the small strip of country lying below the present Mysore State) and Afghanistan. His Greek contemporaries mentioned in his inscriptions were Antiochus II. Theos (B. C. 261-246) King of Syria and Turamāya, Ptolemy II. Philadelphos of Egypt (285-247), Antigonus Gonatus of Macedonia (276-239), Magas of Cyrene (c. 300-c. 250) and Aliksamudra, who was Alexander of Epirus (272-255 B C.) or Alexander of Corinth (252-244 B. C.) The Indian Empire was coterminous with the Syrian kingdom under Antiochus, and included the greater part of Afghanistan (containing Kabul, Herat and Kandhar), Baluchistan and Mekran.

The empire over which he ruled was divided into a number of provinces under four Viceroys who were all *kumārs*, or princes of the royal blood. They were stationed at (1) Takshasila (Taxila), the head-quarters of the Gandhar (Kandhar) or the frontier province, (2) Suvarnagiri in the Deccan (3) Tosali (Dhauli) capital of Kalinga, and (4) Ujjain in Malwa. The Junagarh inscription of King Rudradaman states that Surashtra or Kathiawar was governed in Asoka's time by his governor Tushapa, a Greek officer.

ASOKA'S CONCERN FOR THE PEOPLE

The close attention he gave to business is clear from a passage in Rock Edict VI, which says; "This, therefore, I have done, namely, that at all hours and in all places, whether I am eating or I am in the closed (women's) apartments, in the inner chamber, on horse-back, or in pleasure orchards, the reporters may report *people's business to me.* People's business I do at all places....................I am never satisfied with (my) exertions or with (my) despatch of business. For the welfare of the whole world is an esteemed duty with me, and the root of that is again this, namely, exertion and despatch of business.

There is no higher duty than the welfare of the whole world." Asoka's duty towards his subjects, he himself describes in Kalinga Edicts: "All men are my children and just as I desire for my children that they may obtain every kind of welfare and happiness both in this and the next world, so do I desire for all men." Dr. Bhandarkar remarks that "this presents a strong contrast to the notion that was prevalent before the rise of the Mauryan Power, and according to which the King was considered to be a mere servant of the State and was allowed to levy the prescribed taxes in order that he might receive the wages due to him for his services."

Asoka became a Buddhist in the eighth year of his reign, and for the first two and a half years he remained a lay disciple; then for a year, he lived with the Sangha and took up with zeal the propagation of Dharma (Dhamma). During the first nine years of his reign, Asoka "used to go out on tours of pleasure. Here, there were chase and other diversions."—Rock Edict VIII. Megasthenes, who was very nearly a contemporary of Asoka, thus describes the royal chase in India; "For the chase the King departs in Bacchanalian fashion. Crowds of women surround him and outside of this circle spearmen are ranged. The road is marked off with ropes, and it is death for man or woman alike, to pass within the ropes. Men with drums and gongs head the procession. The king hunts in the enclosures and shoots arrows from a platform. At his side stand two or three armed women. If he hunts in the open grounds he shoots from the back of an elephant. Of the women some are in chariots, some on horses, and some even on elephants and they are equipped with weapons of every kind as if they were going on a campaign."—*Indian Antiquary*, VI, 132. In the tenth year of his reign, Asoka

paid a visit to the Bodhi Tree (Sambodhi) and after that he gave up the chase. He later visited Buddha's birth-place.

ASOKA'S DHARMA.

In Pillar Edicts II and VII, Asoka specifies the qualities which constitute Dhamma. They are (1) much good (2) little defilement (3) mercy (4) liberality (5) truthfulness (6) purity 7) gentleness. He then shows how these are to be practised. He sums up the duties of man as (1) non-slaughter of breathing creatures, (2) non-injury to existing creatures, (3) hearkening to father and mother, (4) hearkening to elders, (5) reverence to teachers, (6) liberality and seemly behaviour towards friends, acquaintances, relatives and towards Brahmin and Sraman ascetics and (7) seemly behaviour towards slaves and servants. Gift of Dharma, according to him is the highest form of gift (Rock Edict XI) In addition to acquiring the positive qualities which constitute Dharma, he exhorts mankind to get rid of certain qualities that lead to *Pāp* or *Asinava.* They are rashness, cruelty, anger, pride and malice. (Pillar Edict III). A man should keep himself free from these and practise the positive virtues in order to fulfil Dharma. His Dharma is severely practical. He does not preach theological or metaphysical doctrines.

Asoka enjoins constant self-examination. "Buddha exhorts Rahula to examine every act of the body, speech or mind before and also after it is initiated." And "Asoka insists upon self-scrutiny being carried on in order that man may not bring about his own fall." He says (Rock Edict VII): "But he is certainly a low man who has no self-restraint and purity of heart, though he may have lavish liberality." He insists that man should free

himself from vice by his own exertions."

The *Dhammapada* says:

By ourselves is evil done
By ourselves we pain endure
By ourselves we cease from wrong
By ourselves we become pure.
None saves us but ourselves
None can and no one may
We ourselves must tread the Path;
Buddhas' only show the way

His self-reliance or the principle of personal responsibility distinguishes Buddhism (and Hinduism) from Christianity and Muhammadanism. According to Christianity, salvation depends utterly on the grace of God, and according to Islam on the belief in the Prophet. Which of these beliefs stimulates human advancement can well be left to the reader.

His attitude towards the various religions is portrayed in Rock Edict XII. He says: "A man must not make an exhibition of reverence to his own religion and condemn another's without any good reason. On the contrary, the other religions should be shown reverence to, on this and that occasion. By so doing, a man exalts his own religion and does service to another's. By doing otherwise, he does harm to both."

In the latter part of chapter IV, Dr. Bhandarkar discusses the essentials of Asoka's Dhamma, the aim and object of Dhamma, his assimilation of some of the psychological concepts of Jainism, and his perfectly tolerant attitude towards Brahminism and other faiths.

ASOKA'S MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES

He not only preached Dharma himself, but had its teachings carved out on rocks, pillars, caves to endure for ever; sent missionaries all over India and to

foreign countries, but constantly made enquiries about the spiritual progress of the people. He studied the different aspects of Buddhism and undertook *Dharma Yātras* (tours) to preach religion. Pillar Edict VII records his burning desire for the uplift of man. He says: "In times past, kings wished that men should grow with a befitting growth of Dhamma. But man did not grow with a befitting growth of Dhamma. How then may men be moved to conform to Dhamma? How may I uplift some of them with a growth of Dhamma?.................. This idea came to me; Proclamations of Dhamma will I proclaim. Instructions in Dhamma will I instruct. Men hearkening thereto will conform, uplift themselves and mightily grow with the growth of Dhamma".

In Rock Edict III he says that in the twelth year of his reign he commended not only the Rajjukas but also the Pradesikas and the Yuktas (all District Officials of the highest grade) to go out on circuit tour every five years to deliver instructions in Dhamma to the people as well as for the discharge of their official duties. The instructions in Dhamma were to impress on the people the necessity of ethical practices which make up Dhamma. In Rock Edict XII, he preaches mutual toleration. He says: "And those who are favourably disposed towards this or that sect should be informed: The Beloved of the gods does not think so much of gift or reverence as—what?—that there should be a growth of the essential among all sects and also mutual appreciation."

In Pillar Edict VII he enumerates some of his philanthropic acts and gives reason for his so doing. "On the roads, I have planted the banyan trees. They will offer shade to man and beast. I have grown mango-orchards. I have caused wells

to be dug at every eight *koses* (sixteen miles), and I have built rest-houses. I have made many watering sheds at different places for the enjoyment of man and beast...........But I have done this with the intent that men may follow the practices of Dhamma." He made endeavours through the Dharma Mahamatras (officials) to induce his relations as well as the general public to perform philanthropic acts. He asks his sons and queens in the Edicts to follow his example and spend money in charities. He established hospitals for men as well as animals in his empire and also *in the territories of the neighbouring kings*. Addressing himself to his sons and grandsons, the great Emperor says: "But that conquest is considered to be the chiefest by the Beloved of the gods, which is conquest through Dharma. And that, again, has been achieved by the Beloved of the gods here and in the bordering dominions even as far as six hundred *Yojanas*." Thus Dhamma was disseminated not only in the whole of India but also in those parts of Syria, Egypt, Macedonia, Epirus and Cyrene, Pegu, Moulmein and other places.

ASOKA'S INSCRIPTIONS

The inscriptions of Asoka are of the utmost value in determining the ethical advance of mankind and understanding the forces which make for the spiritual elevation of humanity. These inscriptions are inscribed either on rocks or stone pillars or in caves. The rock inscriptions may be divided into (1) The fourteen Rock Edicts and (2) The Minor Rock Edicts. The former are found in seven different localities, all on the frontiers of India, the latter in three places in Mysore.

The Pillar inscriptions may also be divided into two classes (1) seven Pillar Edicts and (2) minor

Pillar inscriptions. The former constitute a group, but the latter are four different epigraphs. The Rock and Pillar Inscriptions were called *Dhamma lipis* by Asoka.

The cave inscriptions of Asoka are those found engraved in the caves in the Barabar Hills of Behar and are thirty-three in number.

ASOKA'S PILLARS

Dr. Bhandarkar describes the social and religious life of India in Asoka's time, the position of women in society, the script in use in the country, and finally, the art culture as illustrated by the architecture of his monuments, particularly, the pillars on which his inscriptions, are engraved. He describes the wonderful skill of Indian craftsmen in making the pillars on which the edicts were engraved. "The erection of pillars", he says, "independent and not forming part of any edifices seems to have originated in India alone and is not found in Western Asia or Europe before the time of the Roman emperors. Again the Asokan columns are monoliths of singularly massive proportions from 40 to 50 feet in length and with an average diameter of 2·7". Quarrying blocks nearly four feet square and fifty feet long is an occupation most taxing even to the powers of the twentieth century when we so much boast of our modern scientific knowledge, training and appliances. How the workmen of the Mauryan period achieved this gigantic task two thousand years ago cannot but fill our minds with wonder. But to cut true, dress, and proportion blocks of such stupendous dimensions into beautiful round columns and varnish them like mirror at which even a modern mason stands aghast was a still more arduous and delicate task. Of this even, they acquitted themselves with eminent success. But this is not all. The pillars of Asoka are one and all composed of sandstone from a quarry near Chunar in the

Mirzapur District of the United Provinces. They are believed to have been chiselled there and transported to the different places. The carriage of such unwieldy masses to great distances (and some of the pillars were sent hundreds of miles away from the hillsides where they had been quarried) and setting them up at diverse and remote places demanded an amount of mechanical appliances and ingenuity which would have been most trying, if not impossible, to the modern age".

ASOKA'S PLACE IN HISTORY

In chapter VII, Dr. Bhandarkar discusses Asoka's place in history. He tries to frame an estimate of his work with a view to determine his place in history. He endeavours to understand the ideal which guided Asoka and the inner springs of action that prompted his incessant activities. He quotes Rock Edict VI wherein, Asoka says, "*There is no higher duty than the welfare of the whole world and what little effort I make is in order that I may be free from debt to the creatures, that I may render some happy here.........*" He felt that his duty lay in regard to the whole of mankind and not simply his subjects. In the second Kalinga Edict, he instructs his officers to leave no stone unturned to induce the subjects of the neighbouring independent States to repose full confidence in him and convince them that "the King (Asoka) is unto us even as a father: he loves us even as he loves himself: we are to the King even as his children." His loving activities embraced mankind, nay, all living creatures. This sublime ideal, his love for all creatures, and the earnest life-long efforts he made to bring happiness to mankind give him a place in history which cannot be mistaken.

Dr. Bhandarkar shows how Asoka was superior to Constantine and Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, and greater than Napoleon, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and

Akbar. Constantine espoused a winning cause. He was calculating, shrewd, superstitious, cruel and cynical. Constantine leaned towards toleration for a political purpose. His consummate foresight alone entitles him to be called great. "Asoka, on the other hand, possessed a soul, thoughtful, all-compassionate, of lofty ideals, strenuous endeavour, singleness of purpose and wonderful resourcefulness."

Marcus Aurelius was Roman in civil nobility and pride, Roman in tenacity of imperial aim. He systematically persecuted Christians, because Christianity was incompatible with the ideal of Roman prosperity. The life and administration of Asoka were not vitiated by any narrow or sordid ideal or sullied by inhuman hostility to any section of the human race. No racial, national or family pride marred his life of self effacement. Akbar was "before all things, a politician and a man of the world, and was in no mood to endanger his sovereignty for the cause of truth." Well does Mr. H. G. Wells in his *Outline of History* ask about Alexander, Cæsar, and Napoleon, "what were their permanent contributions to humanity—these three who have appropriated to themselves so many of the pages of our history?" As Alexander's power increased, "his arrogance and violence grew with it. He drank hard and murdered ruthlessly. After a protracted drinking bout in Babylon, a fever came on him and he died at the age of 33". As for Cæsar, "what do we find him to be? Just when he was at the height of power, and might have done good to the world if he were endowed with a lofty vision, we find him feasting and frolicking in Egypt with that siren, Cleopatra, for nearly a year, although he was then fifty-four." As regards Napoleon, Mr. Well says: "the old order of things was dead or dying: strange new forces drove through the world seeking form and direction.........Had this man any profundity of vision and power of creative imagination,

......he might have done work for mankind that would have made him the Sun of history...... Napoleon could do no more than strut upon the crest of this great mountain of opportunity like a cockerel on a dunghill".

Of Asoka, Mr. Wells says: "Amidst the tens of thousand of names of monarchs that crowd the columns of history, Their Majesties, and Graciousnesses and Serenities and Royal Highnesses and the like, the name of Asoka shines and shines almost alone, a star. From the Volga to Japan his name is still honoured. China, Tibet, and even India, though it has left his doctrine, preserve the traditions of his greatness. More living men cherish his memory to-day than have ever heard the names of Constantine or Charlemagne".

From the materials furnished by his lithic records alone, Dr. Bhandakar has succeeded in producing a figure of the great monarch, splendid in proportion, perfect in form, imbued with human spirit, pulsating with life. As it happens, the figure stands forth head and shoulders above the great monarchs of the East or the West. There, however, is the rub. For an Indian, to be compared with the greatest of the European monarchs and found superior to them all is, in the eyes of some of the political votaries of the European civilization, nurtured from infancy on the doctrine of the eternal superiority of the West over the East, if not blasphemous, certainly incredible. What becomes of the theory so diligently disseminated by the politically-minded scholars and critics, that there is no achievement intellectual, moral or physical—in science, literature, art, administration or personal greatness—which would entitle an Indian to stand with his head erect and shoulders square amongst the citizens of the Western world? If anything great or remarkable is to be found in the present or the past history of his country, is it not the result of Hellenic or Assyrian or other foreign influence? There is no good in Galilee. Has

not an English writer put the whole case in a nutshell when he declared: "There is nothing worth knowing in India till the British came to the country."

Is Dr. Jarl Carpentier's criticism of Bhandarkar's *Asoka* an illustration of the present-day critical attitude towards things Indian? The two particular points in the book on which the learned doctor animadverts are:—(1) that Christianity—Dr Carpentier's "Our religion"—was deeply influenced by Buddhism, an alien religion of Indian origin, and (2) Bhandarkar comparing Asoka with Alexander the Great, Cæsar, Constantine and Marcus Aurelius and pronouncing him greater than any one of them.

The missionary achievements of Asoka in foreign climes is thus derisively described by the learned doctor in the journal of the Royal Asiatic Society: "For does he not tell us how he caused *Dharma* to be spread also in the realm of the Yavana king Antiyoka (Antiochus) and even further. And is not the legitimate reference that the Ambassadors of that pious prince to foreign courts not only preached Buddhism—much as the *dutas* of the Moscow Government preach their doctrines, but also succeeded in converting at least the non-Greek populations of Egypt, Syria etc, to their faith."

Mark the use of the word *Prince*. We, however, find a truer appreciation of Asoka's great achievements in the work of Dr. Sir Vincent Smith. In his book on Asoka (p 45), he says:

> We must allow Asoka the honour to having personally organized with the aid of his enormous Imperial power, *the most comprehensive scheme of missionary enterprise recorded in the history of the world.*

He adds (p. 43) that Asoka "ventured to send his proselytizing agents far beyond the limits of India into the dominions of Antiochos Theos, the king of Syria and Western Asia (B.C 261-246) Ptolemy Philadelphos, King of Egypt (B.C. 285-247); Magas, King of Cyrene

in North Africa, half brother of Ptolemy (about B.C. 285-258), Antigonas Gonatas, King of Macedonia (B.C. 277-239), and Alexander, King of Epirus (acc. B.C. 272)."

He further says (p. 105-6):—"We can discern a man of strong will, unwearied application and high aims, who spared no labour in the pursuit of his ideals, possessed the mental grasp capable of forming the vast conception of *missionary enterprise in three continents* and was at the same time able to control the intricate affairs of Church and State in an empire which the most powerful sovereign might envy."

THE OTHER SIDE

But there is no such thing as unmixed good in this world. Dr. Bhandarkar, after describing the unifying influence of Asoka's work and teaching in India, shows what he thinks is the other side of the picture. He says that the unceasing efforts of Asoka to realise his lofty aim destroyed the equipoise between material progress and spiritual culture in India and tended so far to subordinate the material element in Hindu civilization to the spiritual, that it became unprogressive and decadent. Says Dr. Bhandarkar, "Love of peace and hankering after spiritual progress were no doubt engendered and have now been ingrained in the Indian character. The Hindu mind which was already spiritual, became infinitely more spiritual. But that must have created some apathy to militarism, political greatness, and material well-being......Asoka's new angle of vision, sounded a death-knell to the Indian aspiration of a centralised national State and world-wide empire. The effects of his policy were manifest soon after his death. Dark clouds began to gather on the North-Western horizon and hardly a quarter of a century had elapsed since his demise when the Bactrian Greeks crossed the Hindu-kush and began to cause the decay of what was once a mighty empire". He adds: "What

is worse is that the Greek inroads soon after the demise of Asoka for which his change of policy appears to be responsible, opened a passage into India to the various wild hordes such as the Sakas, Palhavas, Kushanas, Hunas, Gurjars, and so forth whom we now find pouring unceasingly into the country till the sixth century A. D."

It is well that Dr. Bhandarkar has drawn attention to this aspect of the pacifism preached in the third century B. C. Just as an abnormal development of the material power of people and the neglect of spiritual culture lead to brutality, cruelty and repudiation of the moral doctrine, so does constant harping on the spiritual development of a people and the neglect of its physical and material resources lead it to imbecility, cowardice and disunity. Both are ruinous. Wise attention to the development of all the powers and resources of a nation, material as well as spiritual, alone makes for real and lasting improvement. A harmonious and simultaneous development of the physical and the spiritual powers and resources alone constitutes a real advance in human civilization and world welfare.



COLONEL R. G INGERSOLL

COLONEL INGERSOLL[1]

Who live again in minds made better by their presence,
Who live in pulses stirr'd to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude,
In scorn for miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars;
Who, with their mild persistence, urge man's search
To vaster issues.

GEORGE ELIOT.

"OLD order changeth, yielding place to new." So sang Tennyson in his day. But the singing has rung through the ages, more truly and intensely through recent times.

The amazing discoveries of Science, the wonderful advance in human arts, the birth of new conceptions of rights and duties, the emergence of new sociological truths, have brought about a rapid evolution of things in the world, upsetting old political institutions, undermining religious organizations, and revolutionizing Society. Old governments, social orders, usages and religious sanctions have been swept away in Europe and America. The same process has for some time been at work in Asia—in Turkey, Japan, China, India, and other countries. There is hardly a country of the world that has not been touched by the "divine discontent" with the old order based on the exigencies of earlier times.

India is now in a ferment. Caught amidst the vortex of the new world-forces which have shaken

[1]Foreword to Mr. Ram Gopal's *Selections from Ingersoll*, published in 1931 A. D.

the foundations and fabrics of the old institutions and civilizations, it could not but be influenced by them. Intellectual revolution, that is, revolution in thoughts and ideas, which always precedes a material and moral revolution, has for some time past been going on in India, and old values of things are now being revised, modified and sometimes rejected.

Change is the law of life, as it is of nature. Stagnation and want of movement bring death. A society that fears and fights against change, that refuses to move, withers and dies. An adjustment of relations between the ever-changing facts and conditions surrounding a man and his acts and practices, is necessary to enable him to live and prosper. So is it with a community or a nation.

The publication of the "*Selections from Ingersoll*" at this juncture is therefore very opportune, and Mr. Ram Gopal has done a service to the country by bringing out the new view-points and outlooks of this great American touching some of the most vital questions that are now agitating India. Old beliefs are crumbling, old institutions and practices are found unsuitable, and old values are proving false. New beliefs, ideas and institutions are being presented to the country for acceptance. *This book will furnish material to test the truth and soundness of the new presentations.* Leaving aside Ingersoll's views on agnosticism and Free-thought, the book places before us principles to guide human conduct which the highest thought of the new world has established after a thorough examination of the old and new forces working therein, and after a careful consideration of the results of the old institutions that have worked under modern conditions in Europe and America. Ingersoll represents the high water-mark of thought and conduct which the most prosperous, successful and advanced of the modern

nations of the world has attained.

Ingersoll was a most remarkable man. A devoted husband, a loving father, a sincere friend, an ideal citizen full of love for mankind, he possessed all the qualities that make a man perfect. Intellectually and morally he was a great man. He was the greatest orator of his time. One of the most sincere of men, he was one of the greatest lovers of liberty and an implacable enemy of superstition and untruth, of injustice, cruelty and slavery of every kind. There never was a greater worshipper of truth, a more steadfast supporter of personal freedom in the world. "I would not smother," he exclaimed, "one sentiment of my heart to be the emperor of the whole world." He was one of the most loving, charitable and generous of men.

The sublimity of his nature, the greatness of his mind, the tenderness of his heart full of boundless paternal love, express themselves in the beautiful homily:—

"*But I will tell you what I say to my children*: 'Go where you will, commit what crime you may, fall to what depths of degradation you may, you can never commit any crime that will shut my door, my arms or my heart to you. As long as I live, you shall have one sincere friend.'"

Having attained the greatest measure of freedom from prejudice, he surveyed men and their institutions from a high altitude. The views and opinions of so noble and so grand a man cannot but be of great value to the people not only of this country but of the whole continent of Asia.

Ingersoll's writings and speeches make it abundantly clear that the one outstanding feature of his character was *his consuming love of liberty*. And this love of liberty was genuine and true, unlike the love of liberty of those who, while desiring liberty for themselves, like to have the liberty of enslaving

other nations. These latter love not mankind nor liberty. They love themselves and exploit others for self-aggrandisement. Ingersoll loved mankind, and his heart's desire was to see men in all climes and countries free and happy. He realized the truth that no nation can be happy unless it is free. He believed with Walt Whitman that "the liberty of no man is safe unless the liberty of each is safe." In Ingersoll's own words, "Liberty can be retained, can be enjoyed, only by giving it to others." His thrilling invocation to liberty in his lecture on 'Liberty of Man, Woman and Child,' shows his love of humanity:

"O Liberty, float not for ever in the far horizon; remain not for ever in the dream of the enthusiast, the philanthropist and poet; but come and make thy home amongst the children of men.........I know that, coming from the infinite sea of the future, there never will touch this bank and shoal of time, a richer gift, a rarer blessing, than liberty for man, for woman, and for child."

The only justification and vindication of Government is that it protects liberty. *A government that protects not liberty, stands self-condemned.* Ingersoll believed with Voltaire that "there is but one use for law, but one excuse for government—the preservation of liberty." *The instructive fable of the fat dog and the lean wolf*, quoted by him in his article on "The New Party" in the *North American Review*, in 1887, illustrates his genuine love of liberty:—

"A fat dog met a lean wolf in the forest. The wolf, astonished to see so prosperous an animal, enquired of the dog where he got his food, and the dog told him that there was a man who took care of him, gave him his breakfast, his dinner and supper with the utmost regularity and that he had all that he could eat and very little to do. The wolf said, 'Do you think this man would treat me as he does you?' The dog replied. 'Yes, come along with me.' So they jogged on together towards the dog's home. On the way the wolf happened to notice that some hair were worn off the dog's neck,

and he said, 'How did the hair become worn?' 'That is,' said the dog, 'the mark of the collar; my master ties me up at night.' Oh,' said the wolf, 'are you chained? Are you deprived of liberty? I believe I will go back, I prefer hunger,"

Ingersoll's life-work was to free mankind from superstition, from the tyranny of the dead and the living; to instil truth and liberty in the hearts of men and women, and to inspire them with pity, charity and love for humanity. His whole life is an illustration of the dictum of Thomas Paine,—"The world is my country, and to do good my religion." He found the world steeped in superstition, engaged in worshipping false gods in religious and other matters, because it had abandoned the one and only true guide of conduct in life—Reason. As he says, "Reason is a small and feeble flame, yet it is the only light we possess."

Reason, is the compass of life. Leave it behind, and you embark on a sea of troubles. Dethrone Reason, and Superstition usurps its place and Tyranny is the result. Innumerable crimes have been committed in this world, untold suffering has been inflicted on men, all in the name of religion, because Authority had usurped the place of Reason. Ingersoll appeals to all to discard mere authority, and to follow reason. Therein lies the happiness, the prosperity, the salvation of mankind. By authority is meant authority as opposed to reason. Where authority is founded on reason, or is not opposed to reason, as the authority of the loving parent, the authority of a just law or custom, or the authority to which one has given his free and willing consent, that authority must be respected and obeyed.

Authority, not based on reason, stifles action and bars progress. "Custom," says Ingersoll, "is a prison locked and barred by those who long ago were dust, the keys of which are in the keeping of the dead. Nothing is grander than when a strong or intrepid

man breaks chains, levels walls, and breasts the many-headed mob like some great cliff that meets and mocks the innumerable billows of the sea."

The history of nations shows that **when authority takes the place of reason, religion becomes the chief instrument of a nation's fall.** The gentlest of the English poets and the most religious of them all, sings: —

When nations are to perish in their sins
Tis in the Church the leprosy begins;

*   *   *

Then truth is hush'd that heresy may preach
And all is trash that reason cannot reach;
Then Ceremony leads her bigots forth,
Prepared to fight for shadows of no worth;

*   *   *

As soldiers watch the signal of command,
They learn to bow, to kneel, to sit, to stand,
Happy to fill religion's vacant place
With hollow form and gesture and grimace."

Cowper's Expostulation.

A religion that does not teach love of justice, love of truth, love of liberty; that does not advocate relentless war against slavery in all its forms; that does not admonish its votaries to discard error, to destroy prejudice, is not religion but a delusion, and the sooner it disappears the better for the good of the world and the salvation of mankind.

Ingersoll rightly recognizes that science, philosophy and religion, all deal with the various aspects of the theory and practice of **"How to live"**. There is perfect accord amongst them. Any science, philosophy or religion that sins against this consonance, is false and a mockery. Where priests, pandits, or *mullahs*, whose chief aim is to maintain the authority of the dead over the living, hold sway over the minds of men, *anything against their teachings is denounced as blasphemy.* Every effort to free mankind from slavery

and superstition, every step taken to discard error, every attempt to get rid of an evil custom or pernicious practice sanctioned and honoured by length of time, is denounced as blasphemy. But nothing should be condemned or rejected merely because a priest, a pandit or a *mullah* condemns it. *Ingersoll defines blasphemy* in his own superb way:

> To live on the unpaid labour of other men,—that is blasphemy.
>
> To enslave your fellow-man, to put chains on his body,—that is blasphemy.
>
> To enslave the minds of men, to put manacles upon the brain, padlocks on the lips,—that is blasphemy.
>
> To deny what you believe to be true, to admit that to be true which you believe to be a lie,—that is blasphemy.
>
> To strike the weak and the unprotected, in order that you may gain the applause of the ignorant and the superstitious mob,—that is blasphemy.
>
> To persecute the intelligent few at the command of the ignorant many,—that is blasphemy.
>
> To pollute the souls of children with the dogma of hell, of eternal pain,—that is blasphemy.
>
> To violate your conscience,—that is blasphemy.
>
> The jury that gives an unjust verdict, and the judge that pronounces an unjust sentence, are blasphemers.
>
> The man who bows to public opinion against his better judgment and against his honest conviction, is a blasphemer.

Judge every custom, every practice, dogma, every commandment, in the light of reason that is in you; accept or discard it as reason tells you; allow the same liberty to every man and woman; injure no one because of his or her honest beliefs; assist the weak and fight against the enslavement of men everywhere; give every

one his due; regard all men and women as entitled to equal consideration and justice, and it will follow as the day the night that communal animosities, hostilities and bickerings that are now rending India asunder, will disappear. The world will become a happy place to live in, and life will be filled with peace, prosperity and bliss.

Ingersoll justly condemns those who assume or arrogate superiority because of their particular race, nationality or colour. He rightly rejects the pretensions of the West or the East, the White or the Brown, to the leadership of men, or to the monopoly of power and capacity to help progress or spread civilization. As he says:

"The good men the superior men, the grand men are brothers the world over, no matter what their complexion may be.........I pity the man, I execrate and hate the man who has only to boast that he is white. Whenever I am reduced to that necessity I believe shame will make me red instead of white......

"A government founded upon anything except liberty and justice cannot and ought not to stand. All the wrecks on either side of the stream of time, all the wrecks of the great cities and nations that have passed away, all are a warning that no nation founded upon injustice can stand. From sand-enshrouded Egypt, from the marble wilderness of Athens, from every fallen, crumbling stone of the once mighty Rome, comes as it were a wail, comes as it were a cry, that no nation founded upon injustice can permanently stand."

Dissatisfied with the defective development of the moral sense in men, and with the inadequate recognition of the responsibilities of Government, Ingersoll says in sorrow :—

"I would like to see this world at least so organized that a man could die and not feel that he left his wife and children a prey to the greed, the avarice, or the cruelties of mankind. There is something wrong in a government where they who do the most, have the least. There is something wrong when Honesty wears a rag and Rascality a robe."

Very much akin to these noble sentiments are the observations of the celebrated Persian poet, Hafiz, embodied in his famous *Ghazal* beginning with,

این چه شوریست که در دور قمر می بینم

"We see that the fools get syrup of rose,
While the food of the wise is their heart's blood;
The Arab horse gets galled under a pack saddle,
While an ass wears a golden collar round his neck."

With Oriental fatalism, the Eastern poet ascribes the injustices of the world to Fate, while the practical worker of the West denounces them as the faults and shortcomings of social, political or religious organizations, and works to remove them.

Ingersoll's luminous lectures on Shakespeare, Burns, Humboldt, Thomas Paine, Abraham Lincoln, Walt Whitman, and others, prove not only his high culture and noble nature, but are replete with gems of thoughts. "**Shakespeare** was an intellectual ocean whose waves touched all the shores of thought." **Burns** voiced the ideals of the human race in that superb production of his, 'A man's a man for all that.' Writing of the German scientist, **Humboldt,** Ingersoll says, "Great men seem to be a part of the infinite—brothers of the mountains and the seas." **Voltaire**, who for 60 years waged unrelenting war against hypocrisy and superstition, was, according to Ingersoll, the greatest friend of freedom and the deadliest foe of superstition. "He was the greatest man of his century and did more to free the human race than any other of the sons of men." **Thomas Paine** was "one of the bravest soldiers in the army of human emancipation and always espoused the cause of the weak against the strong." His pamphlets, "*Common Sense*," "*Rights of Man*," and the "*Age of Reason*" first enunciated those great principles of freedom which have now been universally accepted. **Abraham Lincoln**, "the grandest figure of the fiercest

Civil War, the greatest memory of our world," the liberator of four millions of slaves, was one of the best and noblest of men: "Wealth could not purchase him, power could not awe him. He knew no fear except the fear of doing wrong. He had the brains of a philosopher and the heart of a mother." He gave expression to a grand truth when he said, "In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free."

Ingersoll's speech in favour of Protection in America lays down a great truth which any nation may ignore at its peril. He declared:

"A nation that sells raw material will grow ignorant, poor while the people who manufacture will grow intelligent and rich. To dig, to chop, to plough, requires more muscle than mind, more strength than thought. But to invent, to manufacture, to take advantage of the forces of nature, this requires thought, talent, genius. This develops the brain and gives wings to the imagination. *It is better for Americans to purchase from Americans, even if the things purchased cost more.* But if we purchase a ton of steel rails from England for 20 dollars, then we have the rails, and England the money. But if we buy a ton of steel rails from an American for 20 dollars, then America has both the rails and the money."

After showing that *the raw material of a locomotive is worth five dollars while the locomotive is worth* 15,000, and that labour has added to the locomotive 14,995 dollars, Ingersoll says:

"Now, then, whoever sells raw material gives away the great profit.........I want you to remember this because it lies at the foundation of the whole subject. Most people who talk on this point bring forward column after column of figures, and a man, to understand it, would have to be a walking table of logarithms. I do not care to discuss it that way. I want to get at the foundation principles, so that you can give a reason as well as myself why you are in favour of protection."

In his Review of Prof. Denslow's "Modern Thinkers," dealing with **Adam Smith's** theory, Ingersoll says:

"I was glad to find that a man's ideas upon the subject of

Protection and Free Trade depend almost entirely upon the country in which he lives or the business in which he happens to be engaged.........It gratified me to learn that even Adam Smith was no exception to this rule, and that he regarded all protection as a hurtful and ignorant interference, *except when exercised for the good of Great Britain.* Owing to the fact that his nationality quarrelled with his philosophy, he succeeded in writing a book that is quoted with equal satisfaction by both parties. The protectionists rely upon the exceptions he made for England, and the Free Traders upon the doctrines laid down for other countries. He seems to have reasoned upon the question of money precisely as we have, and he has argued both sides equally well. Poverty asks for inflation; wealth is conservative and always says there is money enough."

How true of India of to-day!

Ingersoll further remarks, "It may truthfully be said that without money liberty is impossible," for the only other way to get work done is by using force and making people work without payment, and that is slavery. It is therefore true that deflation of currency means restriction of liberty.

Ingersoll did not believe in *the doctrine of States' Sovereignty.* He said in his famous Brooklyn Speech delivered in 1880 :—

"I believe in the rights of the States, but not in the Sovereignty of the States. States are political conveniences. Rising above the States, as the Alps rise above the valley, are the rights of man. Rising above the rights of the Government even in this nation, are the sublime rights of the people. Governments are good only as long as they protect human rights. But the rights of a man should never be sacrificed upon the alter of the States or upon the alter of a nation."

The writings and speeches of Ingersoll are full of inspiration and replete with truths, sparkling wit, and gems of thought. Many of them will stick in the memory of the reader :—

1. In all countries where human beings are held in bondage, it is a crime to teach a slave to read and write.

2. Sirens cannot be changed into good citizens; wild beasts, even when tamed, are of no possible use.
3. The highest philosophy is the Art of Living.
4. Fear is the Jailer of the mind; and Superstition is the assassin of liberty.
5. If nobody has too much, everybody will have enough.
6. He who has no rights, has no duties.
7. Hypocrisy has been sincere only in its dread of truth.
8. Small men appear great only when they agree with the multitude.
9. Liberty sustains the same relation to mind as space does to matter.
10. Colleges are places where pebbles are polished and diamonds are dimmed.
11. Wisdom is the science of happiness.
12. He who endeavours to control the mind by force is a tyrant, and he who submits is a slave.

In his masterly introduction Mr. Ram Gopal has given an illuminating account of the high and heroic character of Ingersoll, his mission and his achievements. A mere glance at the contents of this book will show the wide range and diversity of subjects presented to the reader. A deep earnestness and high ethical tone pervades all writings and speeches of Colonel Ingersoll, and their sparkling wit, wisdom and humour make them all so attractive and of lasting benefit to the reader.



DR RABINDRA NATH TAGORE

RABINDRANATH TAGORE[1]

Things of the noblest kind his genius drew,
And look'd through nature at a single view:
A loose he gave to his unbounded soul,
And taught new lands to rise, new seas to roll;
Call'd into being scenes unknown before,
And, passing nature's bounds, was something more.

CHURCHILL, *Rosciad*.

HAIL! Rishi of Modern India: the land of Chivalry, Rajputana, tenders its greetings to you on your seventieth birthday. Hail! the embodiment and the true representative of all that is high and noble in the Culture of India. You embody not only the spiritual culture of Ancient India, but have given it a beautiful expression, in language as inimitable, as sublime, as soul-stirring as the spirit of that culture, carrying a message of joy of life in nature. Your work illustrates not only the depth of that culture but also its all-embracing universality, thus vindicating not only the glory and greatness of Aryan (Hindu) Culture but its triumph over modern thought and modern feeling which the world is slowly recognising and realising.

A great poet is a great seer. You, the greatest poet of Asia of modern times are also its greatest seer. You have the vision to find the joy of life in everything that lives and lives eternally, though it assumes new shapes and new forms, thus illustrating the eternal nature of Truth and proving that Truth is Joy and Joy is Truth.

The highest representative of true Indian Culture, your exposition of it in the various cultural centres of

[1] From *The Golden Book of Tagore*, 1931, A. D.

the West and the Far East has had favourable repercussions, and has placed India, the source of that culture, in a new light, rehabilitating it in the minds of leaders of thought in every country, giving it a high place in the heirarchy of nations. Your genius has the quality of universality and it is because of this unique quality which no one else in the East or the West is known at the present time to possess in such a striking degree, that you are the first and so far the only true interpreter of the Eastern Thought and Culture to the West. Indian Culture and Art have found their supreme expression in you, and because of this you are best fitted not only truly and satisfactorily to interpret the East to the West but co-ordinate the best in both in a new whole.

You are a great poet and a great philosopher, imbued with the true spirit of philosophy. You are a novelist. As a teller of short stories, you are unrivalled in the world. The pathos in them stirs the soul deeply. You are a dramatist and an essayist. As an educationist you belong to the highest order, as your vision sees through the barriers which baffle even trained minds, and your imagination reaches the further flights of human nature. Your realisation of the essential elements of human nature transcends colour, dogma or nationality.

Your consummate art, apart from its literary expression, shows itself in your drawings and paintings and your histrionic gifts and musical compositions. Your superb mind shows its high qualities in whatever department of mental activity it finds occasion to work. As a poet, a philosopher, a patriot and a philanthropist you have achieved world-wide fame and brought honour to the country which has given you birth, and through which, as your countrymen are proud to recognise, you are serving Humanity.

HAZRAT IMAM HUSAIN[1]

Gashed with honourable scars
Low in glory's lap they lie,
Though they fell, they fell like stars
Streaming splendour through the sky.

J. MONTGOMERY, *The Battle of Alexandria.*

HEROISM exalts life. The world would have been a very poor place to live in, if the heroes who have flourished in all countries and in all ages had not made human society rich with their deeds. Their lives, their acts, are a perennial source of inspiration to mankind, and men and women derive strength and support in their lives by reading the lives of heroes, and by listening to a recital of the heroic deeds of past generations. The heroes have enriched life in every part of the globe and taught men and women to stick fast to the path of duty. The noble deeds of heroic men and women live for ever. When one reads or hears an account of these brave deeds in prose or in poetry, he feels himself lifted up to a freer, a more refreshing atmosphere and forgets the depressing surroundings created by the grinding drudgery of life rendered more and more difficult by the rapidity with which the world is being mechanised.

The silent but sure action of the ennobling feelings and sentiments aroused in human breast by reading or by listening to the recital and contemplation of the noble deeds of heroes produces a very wholesome effect on the character and conduct of countless men and

[1]From *Husain—The Martyr*, published by the Provincial Shia Conference, Patna, in 1932 A. D.

women in all countries. Hazrat Imam Husain was one of the foremost heroes produced by Islam. The supreme sacrifice he made and the noble spirit in which he gave up his life for the sake of truth and honour, are shining examples of what a man, inspired by the highest motive of serving humanity can and should do. The life of Imam Husain is moulding the lives and actions of millions of people in Asia and Africa and helping them to bear with fortitude and courage the ills, troubles and misfortunes which at some time or other come to every man and woman in life, and which unfortunately increase as life becomes more and more complicated under the stress of modern Civilization. The Bihar and Orissa Provincial Shia Conference have done public service by publishing "The Golden deeds of Imam Husain" and are to be congratulated on their intention to bring out another more comprehensive volume on the life of Imam Husain. The wider the knowledge of the heroic deeds of Imam Husain spreads in the world, the better will it be for all, as not only will it remove many misunderstandings regarding the life and work of one of the greatest men produced by Islam, but the lesson of his life will help to elevate life in all ranks and all climes.

PART III

HISTORICAL AND ARCHÆOLOGICAL.



EMPEROR PRITHVIRAJA

PRITHVIRAJA VIJAYA[1]

Clime of the unforgotten brave!
Whose land from plain to mountain cave
Was freedom's home or glory's grave
Shrine of the mighty! Can it be,
That this is all remains of thee?

BYRON, *The Giaour.*

THIS celebrated historical poem, written to sing the glories of the last Hindu emperor of India, the illustrious Prithvīrāja Chauhān, records the gallant deeds of the Chauhān kings of Ajmer, and is of great importance to the history of India. Only one manuscript copy of the poem is known to be in existence. It is a birch-bark MS. in Sāradā characters and is in the Deccan College library, Poona, where it is numbered 150 in the catalogue[2] of the collection of 1875-6. It was discovered in Kashmir in A. D. 1875 by Dr. Bühler in the course of his tour in search of Sanskrit MSS.[3]

All that is known of the contents of this poem is from (1) the few lines in Dr. Bühler's report[4] of his Kashmir tour; (2) Dr. Bühler's article on "Ajmer" in the *Indian Antiquary*, vol. xxvi, pp. 162-3; (3) his letter to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, published in the Proceedings of the Society for April-May, 1893, pp. 94-5; and (4) Mr. J. Morison's short article

[1] From the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, April, 1913.

[2] *Catalogue of the Collections of MSS. deposited in the Deccan College*, by S. R. Bhāndarkar, 1888, p. 81.

[3] Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, extra No. xxxivA, 1877 A.D., p. 63.

[4] Ibid.

headed "Some Account of the Genealogies in the Prithvīrāja Vijaya", in the *Vienna Oriental Journal*, vol. vii, pp. 188-92.

The condition of the MS. is far from satisfactory. "In many places," says Mr. Morison, "the material has been frayed away, and the text is therefore defective." In fact, the lower portions of most of the bark leaves are gone, and of the twelve sargas (cantos) contained in the MS. not one is complete. Dr. Bühler says: "It is a great pity that the old MS. is mutilated and in such a condition as to make the work of reading it very difficult. The beginning is wanting. The leaves which contain cantos i—x, have been broken in the middle by the friction of the thick string used for sewing the volume. Further, the lower portions of a considerable number of leaves have been lost, and as the lower left-hand side of the margin on which stood the figures numbering the leaves have also been broken off, it is impossible to determine the connection of the upper and the lower halves by any other means than by the sense."[1]

Last year I got a transcript of this MS. made by a pandit through Mr. (now Dr.) Belvalkar, of the Deccan College, Poona, and after a careful perusal of the poem a brief summary of such of its contents as are of historical value is given below.

The name of the author of the poem has, unfortunately, not been preserved in the MS. He appears, however, to have been a court poet of Prithvīrāja, as, in the first sarga, the emperor is expected to listen to the recitation of the poem. He was probably a Kashmiri pandit,[2] as (1) his style closely resembles that of Bilhana, the author of *Vikramāṅkadevacarita*;

[1] Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, extra No. xxxivA, 1877 A. D., p. 63.

[2] See also Dr. Bühler's letter in the Proceedings of the Bengal Asiatic Society for 1893, p. 94.

(2) the Mangalācaran and criticism of other poets in the beginning of the poem are on the same lines as in Bilhaṇa's work, (3) Kashmir is praised (sarga xii, leaf 83); (4) the camel, perhaps the most useful animal in Rajputana, is ill-spoken of in the poem, which no poet of Rajputana would do; (5) the Kashmiri poet, Jonarāja, the author of the second *Rājataraṅgiṇi*, has written a commentary on it, and (6) so far as is known, the work has been mentioned and quoted from only by a Kashmiri writer, Jayaratha, and that soon after the composition of the work.

It is possible that Jayānaka, the Kashmiri poet, whose entry in the court of Pṛithvīrāja is recorded in sarga xii just at the end of the MS., was the author of *Prithvīrāja Vijaya*, but until a complete copy of the work is discovered, the mystery is likely to remain uncleared.

As regards the date of the poem, it appears that it was composed during the lifetime of Pṛithvirāja. This finds confirmation from the fact that the poet Jayaratha, who flourished about A. D. 1200,[1] quotes in his work *Viamarsini*,[2] from the *Prithvīrāja Vijaya*. And though the probabilities are that the poem was composed after the achievement of Prithvirāja's chief exploit, his great victory over Sultān Shahāb-ud-din Ghori in A. D. 1191,[3] it is clear that as the poem mentions in sarga ii the defeat of the Ghori Sultān at the hands of the king of Gujrāt (Bhimadeva), which event, according to the *Ṭabaqāt-i-Nāsiri*, took place in A. H. 574 (A. D. 1178),[4] the poem must have been composed some time after A. D. 1178, but before A. D. 1200.

Apart from the literary merits of the poem, which

[1]Duff's *Chronology of India*, p. 171. His brother Jayadratha lived about A.D. 1150 (ibid., p. 153).

[2]Bombay edition, p. 64 [3]Duff's *Chronology of India*, p. 167.

[4]Raverty's *Tabaqāt-i-Nāsiri*, p. 452; also Duff's *Chronology of India*, p. 162.

are considerable, the accuracy of the historical information contained in it is not only vouched for by the fact that the well-known historian, Jonarāja the author of the second *Rājataranginī* and the well-known commentary on *Kirātarjuniya* (written in A. D. 1448), has written a commentary on it, but receives full support from important inscriptions discovered in various places. The mention by Jonarāja of various readings shows that the poem enjoyed great popularity in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries A. D.

SUMMARY OF ITS CONTENTS.

The first sarga sings the praises of the poets Vālmīki, Vyāsa, Bhāsa,[1] the author of *Vishnudharmah*, and mentions the contemporary poets Krisṇa and Viśvarūpa; and, while running down Krisna, eulogizes Viśvarūpa and the Emperor Prithvīrāja, who is said to have been conversant with six languages. Viśvarūpa is stated to have belonged to Ajmer and to have been the friend and guide of the author. It is stated that the author was greatly esteemed by Prithvīrāja. He (the author) then dilates on the promise of greatness given by Prithvīrāja in his childhood. The author's residence in Pushkar[2] is then mentioned, and we are told that a temple of Śiva named Ajagandha Māhādeva existed there at the time. The poet makes Brahmā say to Visnu that originally there were three *yagnakunds* (sacrificial pits), but in course of time they became lakes. The sarga ends with an account of the great sanctity of Pushkar.

The second sarga contains an account of the

[1]The greatest of the dramatists who flourished before the time of Kālidāsa. Only recently some thirteen dramas of Bhāsa were discovered in Travancore, though *Visnudhārmāh* is not one of them. *Vide*, *Svapna Vāsavadatta* (Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, No. xv), Introduction, p. 1.

[2] For a detailed account of Pushkar see *Ajmer: Historical and Descriptive*, pp. 136–46.

descent into this world of Chāhāmāna—the founder of the Chauhān clan of Rajputs—from Sūryamandal. In several places he is mentioned as belonging to the Solar dynasty of kings. His brother, Dhananjaya, was his commander-in-chief. In his family was born Vāsudeva, who was greatly respected by his contemporaries.

The third and the fourth cantos are taken up with an account of Vāsudeva and his going to Sākambhari (Sāmbhar), the famous salt lake which is situated at a distance of 53 miles north-east of Ajmer. The origin of the salt lake is thus described by the poet:

Vāsudeva one day went on a hunting expedition. Being impelled by good omens he did not return to his capital, but had a lofty palace built there which no one else was allowed to enter. One day, after spending the midday in the hunt, he retired to his palace, where he found a divine being, decked in jewels, sleeping on his bed. The king was very much surprised, and from a magic pill which slipped from the sleeper's half-open mouth and rolled towards the king's feet, he inferred that the sleeper was a Vidyādhar. Suddenly the Vidyādhar awoke, and as the power to fly in the air which these celestial beings possess depends on the possession of the pill, he was very disconsolate at losing it. The king offered him the pill, at which the Vidyādhar complimented him on his magnanimity in not having taken advantage of his sleep to get possession of a charm of such power, even when lying at his feet. He then told the king that his father was a Vidyādhar named Śākambhar, whose devotions in that forest had pleased the goddess Pārvati so much that she resided there under the name Śākambhari; that the speaker often paid visits to the shrine, the fruit of which he had obtained in meeting such a high-minded personage as the king. He then told the king to send away his army, and at sunset to plant his lance in the ground and ride away towards

his capital[1] without ever looking back, adding that that would be some small recompense to the king for his favour to the Vidyādhar. Saying this, the Vidyādhar vanished. The king did as he was told. While he was riding away at full speed he heard the sound of ocean's waves behind him, and forgetting the advice of the Vidyādhar he looked behind to see what was following him. The Vidyādhar appeared, this time in the sky, and said that that was to be a salt lake. Kurukshetra (5 yojans=40 miles in extent) conferred benefit in the next world only, while the salt lake would bring renown to the king's line, as it would yield advantages in both the worlds. He added that the goddess Śākambhari and Áśāpuri, the family deity of the king, would keep up the lake, which would always remain in the possession of his family. The Vidyādhar then disappeared, having first pointed out to the king that he had come to the shrine of Śākambhari, to whom he should now go to pay his respects. The king dismounted and tasted the water of the lake and having spent the night not very far from the feet of the goddess started for his capital the next morning.[2]

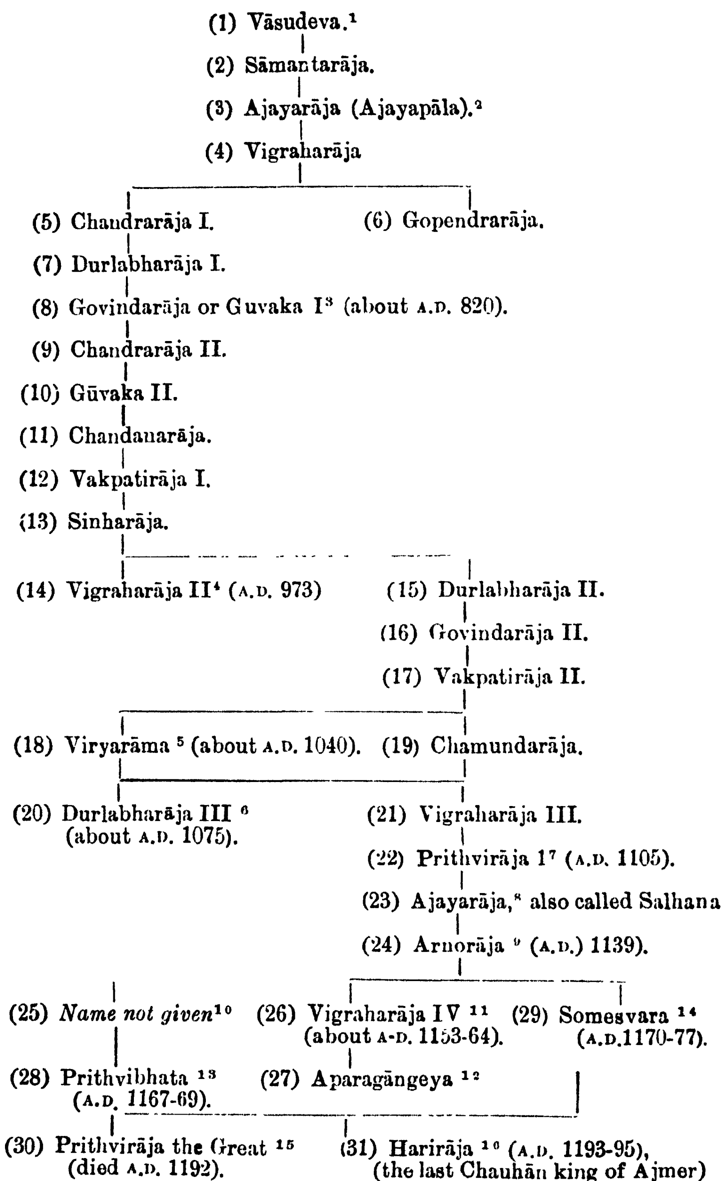
The fifth sarga contains the genealogy of the descendants of King Vāsudeva, with short accounts of

[1] According to the Bijolian inscription, Vāsudeva's capital was Ahichhatrapur. An inscription recently found in the possession of the descendants of Gyanchandra Jati, Colonel Tod's *guru*, says that Ahichhatrapur was the capital of Jāngladesa—the country which subsequently came to be known as Sapādalakhsh.

[2] Tradition says that when in s. 741 (A. D. 684) Dula Rai, the Chauhān king of Ajmer, was slain, and his younger brother "Mānik Rai fled, pursued by his foe, the goddess Sākambhari appeared to him and bade him establish himself in the spot where she manifested herself, guaranteeing to him the possession of all the ground he could encompass with his horse on that day but commanded him not to look back until he had returned to the spot where he left her. He commenced the circuit with what he deemed his steed could accomplish, but, forgetting the injunction, he was surprised to see the whole space covered as with a sheet. This was the desiccated *sirr*, or salt lake, which he named after his patroness Sākambhari, whose statue still exists on a small island in the lake, now corrupted to Sambhar".—Tod's *Rajasthan*, vol. ii, p. 490 (Calcutta edition).

some of them. After Vāsudeva came Sāmantarāja, but it is not stated whether he was Vāsudeva's son or even his immediate successor. The genealogy given here corresponds exactly with that given in the famous Bījolian (Mewār) inscription of A.D. 1170, which begins with Sāmant and ends with Someśvara, except that the latter has Gūvaka in place of Govindarāja, (No. 8) and Saśinripa (synonym of Chandrarāja) for Chandrarāja (No. 9), and one Sinhata between Chāmuṇḍarāja (No. 19) and Durlabha (No. 20), which latter name appears as Dusal. Also, that in the Bījolian inscription, Vākpatirāja (No. 12) is called Vappyarāja, and Govindarāja (No. 16) Gandu. *Vide*, the Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society, vol. LV, pt. i., p. 40. The text is full of mistakes, and some of the names have not been correctly deciphered. I have referred to the correct copy of the inscription prepared by P. Gauri Shankar Ojha. The genealogies given in (1) the Bījolian inscription of A.D. 1170, (2) the Harśa Stone inscription of A.D. 973 (*Epigraphia Indica*, vol. ii, pp. 116—130), (3) at the end of *Prabandhakosa*, stated to be four or five centuries old (vide, *Gaüḍavaho*, Introduction, p. cxxxvi, n. ii), (4) the *Hammīra Māhākavya*, written about the beginning of the fifteenth century A.D., (5) the *Surjan Carita* (written in the sixteenth century A.D.[1]), which last we owe to the courtesy of Māhāmahopādhyāya P. Har Prasāda Śāstri of Calcutta, are given below in tabular form to show that the genealogy in the *Prithvīrāja Vijaya* finds full support from the inscriptions, and that with the lapse of time and the disappearance of writings like the *Prithvīrāja Vijaya* and old inscriptions, the genealogical lists became more and more inaccurate.

[1]No. 1135 of the Government collection of MSS. in the library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. It is an epic poem of twenty cantos, and was written at the request of Surjana Singh of Bundi, at Chunar, during Akbar's reign, by the poet Chandra Sekhara, a Bengali Vaidya by caste.



[1]The genealogy given at the end of the *Prabandhakosa* MS., which is

The *Prithvīrāja Vijaya* says that Gūvaka II's sister named Kalāvati had twelve suitors for her hand. She

stated to be four or five centuries old, gives v.s. 608 (A.D. 551) as the date when Vāsudeva flourished. Vide *Gaudavaho* (Bombay Sanskrit Series, No. xxxiv), Introduction, p. cxxxv, note.

[2] Called Jayantrāja in Jonarāja's Commentary. According to the *Prabandhakosa* genealogy, this Ajayarāja was the founder of Ajmer.

[3] The Harsa Stone inscription (*Epigraphia Indica*, vol. ii, p. 121, verse 13, n. 26) says that Gūvaka "attained pre-eminence as a hero in the Assembly of the prince " Nāgāvaloka. This Nagāvaloka was undoubtedly the Pratihāra king Nāgabhata of Mārwār and Kanauj, whose Buchakalā inscription is dated the v.s. 872 (A.D. 815), and who died in s. 890 (A.D. 833). Gūvaka must, therefore, have flourished about A.D. 820. Mr Morison omits this "Govindarāja " in the genealogy given in his article in the *Vienna Oriental Journal*, vol. vii, pp. 188-92, though the MS. plainly says :—

प्रजापतिपद ब्रह्मा शाङ्गरयपुरषोत्तमः ।

सुतो गोविन्दर जोस्य शक्तित्रयमहेस्वरः ॥

(Sarga v, 21).

[4] The Harsa Stone inscription (*Epigraphia Indica*, vol. ii, pp. 116-30)

[5] Viryarāma was a contemporary of King Bhoja of Mālwā (A. D. 1010-53).

[6] Durlabharāja III assisted King Udayāditya of Mālwā (A.D. 1059-86) in defeating King Karan of Gujarāt, who reigned A.D. 1063-93.

[7] The Jina Māta Temple inscription (unpublished) of v.s. 1162, *vide* Progress Report of the Archæological Survey of India, Western Circle, for 1909-10, p. 52.

[8] The genealogy after Ajayarāja is given in cantos vi-viii.

[9] Another inscription in the temple of Jina Māta, of the time of Arnorāja, *vide* Progress Report A S. India, W.C., for 1909-10, p. 52.

[10] Though the *Prithvirāja Vijaya* nowhere mentions the name of Arnorāja's eldest son by Sudhavā, we find from the *Hammira Mahākāvya* the *Prabandhakosa*, and *Surajan Cartira* that his name was Jugdeva and that he succeeded Arnorāja as king of Ajmer. The Gwalior and Kamaon MS. genealogies consulted by General Cunningham also mention Jugdeva; see A.S. Reports, vol. i, p. 158.

[11] The *Harakeli Nātaka*, by Emperor Vigraharāja IV (*Indian Antiquary*, vol. xx, p. 212), gives the date of the play as Mārgha Sudi 5, s. 1210 (November 22, A.D. 1153), and the Delhi Sivalik pillar inscription of Vigraharāja (*Ind. Ant.*, vol. xix, p. 218) is dated the Vaisakha Sudi 15, v.s. 1220 (April 9, A.D. 1164).

[12] Mr. Morison omits this name in his article in the *Vienna Oriental Journal*, but the MS. contains it. Sarga viii, verse 54, says—

सुतोप्यपरगाङ्गे यो निन्येस्यरविमुनुना ।

उन्नतिं रविशस्य पृथ्वीराजेनपश्यता ॥

The *Prabandhakosa* genealogy mentions him as Visaldeva's (Vigraharāja)

chose for her lord the King of Kanauj, to whom she was married. Gūvaka defeated the remaining eleven princes and gave their wealth to her sister.

Gūvaka's son Chandanarāja's[1] queen was named Rudrāṇi, also called Ātmaprabhā and Yogini. She fixed 1,000 lingas of Śiva on the ghats of the Pushkar lake. They were like lamps to remove darkness. Chandanarāja's son, Vākpatirāja I,[2] was a great warrior and won 188 victories. He built a large Śiva temple at Pushkar. Sinharāja (No. 13) also built a Śiva temple at Pushkar.[3] He possessed a large force of cavalry and was called "the enveloper in darkness by the dust raised by the heels of his horsemen." He was very forbearing towards his enemies.

successor and names him Amargāngeya. The historian Abu-l-Fazl mentions him, but calls him Amargangu. The Kamaon and Gwalior MS. genealogies call him Gangadeva or Amardeva; *vide* Archæological Survey of India, vol. i, p. 158

[13] The Hansi inscription (*Indian Antiquary* for 1912, p. 19). See also the Mainal inscription of A.D. 1169 in the Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society, vol. LV, pt. i, p. 64. Prithvibhata died in A.D. 1169, as his successor Somesvara is mentioned as reigning in the Bijolian inscription of V.S. 1226, Phalgun Vadi 3 (February 5, A.D. 1170); *vide*, Bengal Asiatic Society's Journal, vol LV, pt. i, p. 40.

[14] The (unpublished) Anvāldā inscription of the time of Somesvara in P. Gauri Shankar's collection is dated the Bhādrapad Sudi 4, V.S. 1134 (A.D. 1177).

[15] The earliest known (unpublished) inscription of the time of Emperor Prithvirāja is the Sati Pillar inscription in Lohari (Mewār), and is dated the twelfth day of the dark half of Asārh, V.S. 1236 (A.D. 1179).

[16] The Tāntoti inscription (unpublished) of King Hariraja, dated Vaisākh Vadi 4, V.S. 1251 (April 13 or 14, A.D. 1194), discovered in February, A.D 1912, now in the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer. The *Tāju-l-Ma'asir* of Hasan Nizāmi says that in A.D. 1193, Harirāja drove out Prithvirāja's son (Govindrāja) from the throne of Ajmer, on which Sultān Mu'izz-ud-din (Shahābud-din) Ghori had placed him after Prithvirāja's death, and not only proclaimed his independence, but advanced towards Delhi to recover it from Qutb ud-din Aibak (Elliott's *History of India*, vol. ii, p. 225). It was in A.D 1195 that Harirāja was finally defeated and Ajmer passed under Qutb-ud-din. *Vide* Duff's *Chronology*, p. 170, and Raverty's *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p. 519.

[1] The Harśa Stone inscription (*Epigraphia Indica*, vol. ii, p. 117), says Chandana defeated or slew in battle the Tomara leader Rudreṇa (probably Tanwar Rudrapāla of Delhi).

[2] Vākpatirāja I put to flight Tantrapāla, a neighbouring chief, by whom he had been attacked; see ibid., p. 117.

[3] The Harśa Stone inscription also mentions his building a Siva

Vigraharāja II (No. 14) conquered the country to the south as far as the Narbadā and defeated[1] King Mulrāja of Gujrāt, who fled to the fort of Kānthdūrga (Kanthkot in Cutch). He (Vigraharāja) built a temple to the goddess Āśāpurā (fulfilment of hope) at Broach, on the banks of the river Rèwā (Narbadā).

Durlabharāja II's (No. 15) minister was named Madhava. Durlabha's son Govindrāja[2] (No.16) was followed by King Vākpatirāja II (No. 17), who killed Ambā Prasāda,[3] ruler of Āghāt (Ahād, the old capital of Mewār), and rent his mouth asunder with a dagger. He was a great warrior and was well remembered at the time the poem was written. King Vīryarāma (No. 18) was killed by the famous King Bhoja of Malwa. Vīryarāma's brother, Chāmundarāja[4] (No. 19), built a temple of Vishnu at Narpur[5] (Narwar). Durlabharāja III (No. 20), also called Vīra Singh, was killed in a battle with the Mātangas (Musalmans).

temple, and adds that he "defeated the Tomara leader together with Lavana, and annihilated in war rulers of men in every direction" (*Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. ii, p. 127). According to the *Prabandhakosa* genealogy, Sinharāja defeated Hajji-ud-Din at Jethān (Jethānā, 20 miles from Ajmer). The *Hammira Māhākāvya* (p. 14) says Sinharāja killed the Musalman general named Hātim.

[1] The *Prabandha Chintāmani* of Merutunga also mentions this event; *vide*, C. H. Tawney's Translation, pp. 23-24. The *Hammira Māhākavyā* (P. 14) says Vigraharājā killed King Mulrāja and conquered his country.

[2] According to the *Prabandhakosa* (*Gaudavaho*, Introduction, p. cxxxvii), Govindrāja defeated Sultān Mahmūd. If this Sultan was Mahmūd of Ghazni, then the event is the one that took place in A. D. 1025 on Sultān Mahmūd's way to Somnāth (Duff's *Chronology of India*, p. 113; also Tod's *Rājasthān*, Calcutta edition of A. D. 1884, vol. ii, p. 493).

[3] The Chitor inscription of S. 1331 (A. D. 1254) published in the *Indian Antiquary*. vol. xxii, p 80, calls him Āmbra Prasāda, while the (unpublished) inscription of S. 1517 (A. D. 1460) found at Kumbalgarh in Mewār (P. Gauri Shankar's collection) gives the name as Ambā Prasāda; so also the *Eklinga Māhātāma*, written during the reign of Rānā Kumbhā of Mewār (A. D. 1423-68). The Chitor and Kumbalgarh inscriptions make him the successor of Sakti Kumāra, whose Ātpur inscription (*Ind. Anti.*, vol xxxix p. 191) is dated the v.s. 1034 (A. D. 977).

[4] The Bijolian inscription (v. 14) also makes Chamundarāja as the successor of Vīryarāma (Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society, vol. lv, pt. i. p. 40).

[5] Narwar is situated in Kishengarh territory at a distance of about 15 miles from Ajmer.

Harśa Stone Inscription (A. D. 973).	Bījolian Rock Inscription (A. D. 1170).	Prithvīrāja Vijaya.
		Chāhāmāna
	Sāmanta	Vāsudeva
	Jayarāja	Sāmantrāja
	Vigraha	Jayarāja
	Chandra	Vigraharāja I
	Gopendra	Chandrarāja, Gopendrarāja
	Durlabh	Durlabharāja
	Gūvaka	Govindrāja
Gūvaka	Sasinripa	Chandrarāja
Chandrarāja	Guvāka	Gūvaka
Gūvaka II	Chandana	Chandanarāja
Chandana	Vappayarāja	Vākpati
Vākpatirāja	Sinharāja	Sinharāja
Simharāja	Vigraha	Vigraharāja II, Durlabharāja
Vigraharāja (A.D. 973), Govindrāja	Durlabha	Govindarāja
Durlabhrājā	Gandu	Vākpatirāja II
	Vakpati	Vīryarāma, Chāmunda
	Vīryarāma	Durlabha, Vigraharāja III
	Chāmunda	Prithvīrāja
	Sinhata	Ajayarāja
	Dūsala, Vīsala	Arnorāja
	Prithvīrāja	Prithvībhata, Vigraharāja IV, Somesvara
	Ajayadeva	Aparagāngeya
	Arnorāja	
	Vigraharāja, Prithvīrāja	
	Somesvara (A. D. 1170)	

Prabandhakosa MS. (probably 14th century A.D)	Hammīra Māhākāvya (early in the 15th Century A. D.)	Surjana Carita (16th century A. D.)
	Chāhamāna	Vāsudeva
Vāsudeva		
	Vāsudeva	Naradeva
Sāmanta		
Naradeva		Ajayapāla
Ajayarāja		
		Ajayarāja
Vigraharāja	Naradeva	
Vijarāja		Sāmantasinha
Chandrarāja	Chandrarāja	
		Gurjara
Govindarajā	Jayapāla Chakrī	
		Chandra
Durlabharāja	Jayarāja	
		Vajra
	Samantsinha	
	Gūvaka	Visvapati
	Nandana	
	Vaprarāja	Harirāja
	Harirāja	
Vatsarāja	Sinharāja	Bhīma
	Bhīma	
Singharāja	Vigraharāja	Vigrahadeva
Duryodhana		
	Gangadeva	Gundadeva
Vijayurāja		
Vappeyivara	Vallabharāja	Vallabha
Durlabharāja		
Gandurāja	Rāma	Rāmanātha
Bālapadeva	Chamundarāja	Chāmunda
Vijayarāja	Durlabharāja	Durlabharāja
Chamundaraja	Dūsala	Dusaladeva
	Visala	Visaladeva
Dusaladeva		
	Prithvirāja	Vallabha
Visaladeva	Alhanadeva	
Prithīvrāja	Anāladeva	Analadeva
Allanadeva		
Anāladeva	Jagadeva	Jugadeva
Jagaddeva	Vīsaladeva	Visaladeva
Visaladeva		
	Jayapāla	Ajayapāla
Amaragāngeya		
	Gangapāla	Gangadeva
Pethaladeva		
	Somesvara	Somesvara
Somesvara		
Prithvīrāja		
Harirāja	Prithvirāja, Harirāja	Prithvīrāja, Manikyarāja

Vigraharāja III[1] (No. 21) gave a horse named Sāranga to King Udayāditya of Mālwā, who with the help of that horse conquered King Karan of Gujrāt.

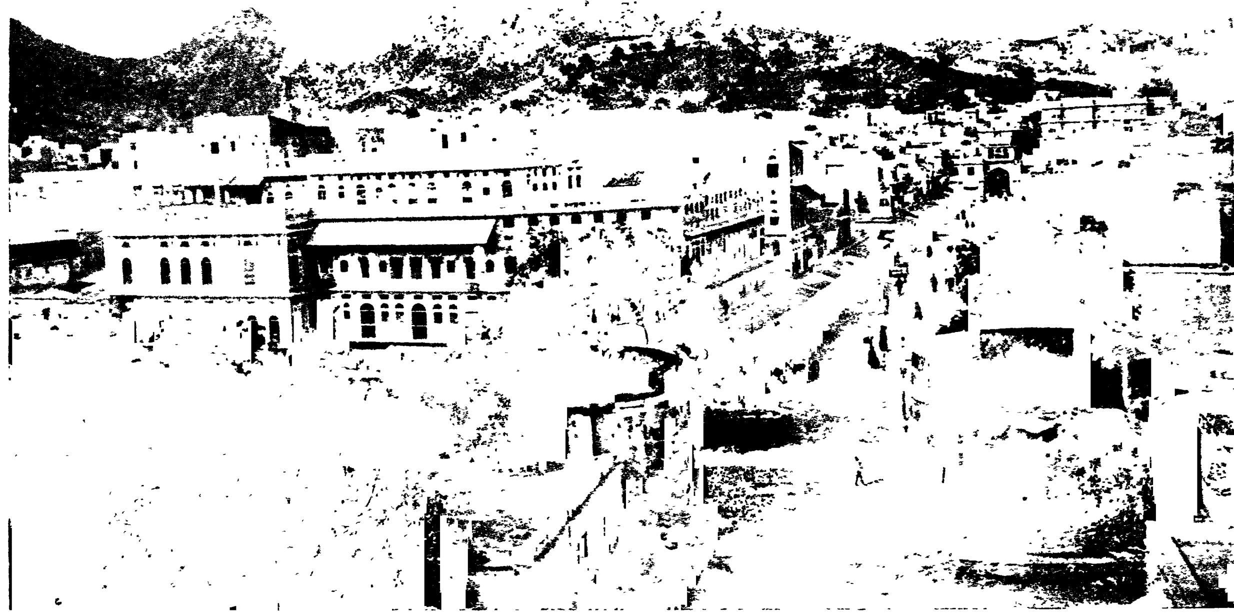
Prithvīrāja I (No. 22)[2] attacked and killed in Pushkar 700 Chàlukyas who had come to rob the Brahmins. He built an alms-house on the road to Somnāth.

Ajayarāja (No. 23) was also called Salhana. He attacked and vanquished Sulhana,[3] King of Mālwa. Ajayarāja filled the world with silver coins, and the poets filled it with dramas composed in *suvarṇa* (good letters). His queen Somalekhā (Somalladevi) used to coin fresh rupees every day. She built a *vāpi* (stepped well) in front of a temple. Ajayaraja attacked and defeated the Musalmans in battle. Ajayarāja founded a town and named it after himself. This is the town of Ajayameru or Ajmer. The poet is eloquent in praise of the town and the palaces in it. He says: "Ajayameru is full of temples of gods and fully deserves the title of Meru (the abode of gods). The sacrificial fire is the cause of rain. From its lofty houses one could pick up the stars like flowers, can bow to the celestial river (the Milky Way) and can listen to the seven sages (in the Great Bear) reciting the Vedas in the evening. Kaliyuga, though it goes everywhere, cannot see it, although a thing situated on an elevation is visible to all. The god Siva is present in the hearts of men, and Cupid blazes in the hearts of ladies, the amorous glances from whose eyes fan him. The rulers

[1] Vigraharāja III is the famous Vir Visala. According to the Bijolian inscription, his queen's name was Rājadevi.

[2] Prithvirāja's queen was Rassalladevi: Bijolian inscription.

[3] The Bijolian inscription says that Ajayarāja captured in a battle Sulhaṇa, the commander-in-chief of the Army, tied him to the back of a camel, and brought him to Ajmer. He is further stated to have killed three kings named Chāchig, Sindhul, and Yásorāja (verse 15). A stone inscription found in the *Adhai dinkā Jhonprā*, Ajmer, and now in the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer. says that Ajáyarāja conquered the country up to Ujjain.



A VIEW OF AJMER

rule over the country as far as the sea and their fame is not confined to the earth. *Bāories* (stepped wells), wells, lakes, and water depots are full of water. People sitting in *jharokās* enjoy the cool breezes of the Ganges of Paradise. The god Varuṇa, afraid of the oceanly fire, has taken shelter here, which is the cause of water being so plentiful, even in the wells on the hill-fort of Ajmer. The perfumed incense burnt by ladies to dry their hair, gathers in thick clouds and hides the moon. The increasing prosperity of the city has laid low the pride of the city of Indra. Other towns are infested with thieves, have tyrannical rulers, are dependent on rain, have famines, and are poor. People get water from Pushkar and revere it. Lovers exchange excellent repartees. Servants laugh at nurses when the latter cry out at children laying their hands on lamps of jewels (which give forth light but burn not). The big blocks of white stone used in building houses in this city make the black spots in the moon appear white by reflected light. The camphor and musk which drop from the bodies of the citizens in the streets make the cloths of the passers-by white-black. The city Rāma conquered after crossing the sea (the Golden Lankā) and that founded by Krishna in the sea (Dwārkā) are not fit to be handmaids of Ajmer. This city is, as it were, the husband of Indra's city, Amravati."

The sixth sarga contains an account of Arnorāja (No. 24). Arnorāja completely vanquished the Musalmans who had come *via* the desert, where for want of water they had to drink the blood of horses. Large numbers of them in heavy armour were killed by the heroes of Ajmer. The victory was celebrated with great éclat, and in order to purify the place where the Musalmans had fallen, the king constructed a lake[1]

[1]This lake, called Ānā Sāgar, after Arnorāja, who is popularly known

and filled it with the river Chandra,[1] which takes its rise in the forest of Pushkar (Pushkarāranya). Arnorāja built a temple of Siva in the name of his father Ajayarāja,[2] which was, like the Himālayās, to fill up the lake.

Arṇorāja had two queens, one named Sudhavā of Avichi (lit. without waves) or Mārwar, and the other Kānchandevī, the daughter of the celebrated Sidharāja Jayasingh of Gujrāt.[3] By Sudhavā, Arṇorāja had three sons, who differed from one another as the three *guṇas* (Satva, Rajas, and Tamas), Vigraharāja being like the Satva. About the eldest the poet simply says that he "rendered to him (his father) the same service as Bhrigu's son (Parasurāma) had rendered to his mother, and went out like a *batti*, leaving behind an evil smell". Kānchandevī gave birth to Someśvara. As the astrologers had foretold that Someśvara's son would be an incarnation of Rāma, so his maternal grandfather took him (Someśvara) away to his Court. The astrologers said that when Rāma declared that after incarnating as Krishna and Buddha, he would again incarnate, Kauśalyā (Rāma's mother) said she would also incarnate and be his mother, and Lakṣmana said he would be his brother. Then follows an account of the Somavanśa, or the lunar race of kings. The Moon, Buddha, Pururavā, and Bharat are described (here

in Rajputana as Ānāji, is the most beautiful sight of Ajmer. Sanskrit writers call Arnorāja, Anāk, Annalladeva; *vide* the Delhi Siwalik Pillar inscription (*Indian Antiquary*, vol. xix, p. 218). The *Hammīra Māhākāvya* (p. 15) says that "Anala dug a tank at Ajmer".

[1]Now called the Bāndi River. Further down its course, it is known as the Luni River.

[2]This is the well-known temple of Ajayapāla, situated in a beautiful valley 7 miles from Ajmer, to the south of the Taragarh Hill.

[3]The *Kīrti Kaumadi* of Someśvara says that Sidharāja Jayasingh differed from Vishnu in this respect, that while Vishnu conquered Arnorāja (ocean) and took his daughter (Lakhshmī), Sidharāja Jayasingh conquered Arnorāja (King of Ajmer) but gave his own daughter to him in marriage (*Kirti Kaumadi*, Bombay Sanskrit Series, canto ii, verses 27-9, p. 11).

there is a break in the MS.), then Kārtavirya (or a thousand arms), whose family later became known as Kalchuri. In his line was born Sāhasikh (courageous), who came to Tripuri, and in the *māsān* (public burning-place for the dead) there saved a man who was at the point of death.

In canto vii, Jayasingh is declared to have been an incarnation of Kumbodhar, a follower of Śiva. Jayasingh was succeeded by his nephew Kumārpāla, and as he brought up young Someśvara, his name Kumārpāla (protector of a child) became a significant one. Kumārpāla always kept Someśvara near himself. Someśvara with his own sword cut off the head of the Rāja of Konkan,[1] during Kumārpāla's invasion of that country. Someśvara married Kārpurdevī,[2] daughter of the King of Tripuri (Tewar, near Jubbulpur, in Central India), and Kārpurdevī gave birth to Prithvīrāja. The poet says that when Kārpurdevī went into the confinement room it was the end of Vaiśākh, bright half, that Mars was in Capricorn, Saturn in Aquarius, Jupiter in Pisces, Sun in Aries, Moon in Taurus, and Mercury in Gemini (the portions of the MS. giving the positions of Venus, the ascending and descending nodes are gone). Prithvīraja was born on Jaistha 12 (the bright or the dark half and the year are not given).

The eighth sarga describes the festivities and rejoicings on the auspicious occasion of the birth of Prithvīraja. A wet nurse was appointed for Prithvīraja. A tiger's claw and illustrations of the ten incarnations of Visnu were placed in his necklace. The queen,

[1] Malikarjuna was the name of this prince. An inscription of his time, dated the Saka year 1078 (April 24, A. D. 1156), is given in Kielhorn's List of Inscriptions of Southern India, No. 311. Malikarjuna must have been killed some time between A. D. 1160 and A. D. 1162 (*vide* Bombay Gazetteer, vol. i, pt. i, p. 186, where, however, Ambada, Kumārpāla's general, is stated to have cut off Malikarjuna's head).

[2] The *Hammira Māhākāvya* (p. 17) also mentions this marriage. So does the *Surjana Carita* of Chand Sekhar.

Kārpurdevī, again became pregnant, and Harirāja was born on Māgh Sud 3.

Vigraharāja IV (No. 26) heard that the earth had been blessed with two sons of his brother (Somesvara); he was pleased and he died in peace. With his death the name "the friend of poets"[1] disappeared. His son, Apargāngeya (No. 27), who was unmarried, also died. Prithvībhata[2] (No. 28), the son of the eldest son of Sudhava (the parricide), also departed, as if to bring back Vigraharāja. Then Lakshmī left the line of Sudhavā, from which males, like pearls, were dropping off, and wished to see Somesvaradeva. The ministers therefore brought Somesvara to the Sapādlaksh[3] country, and Kārpurdevī entered the city of Ajayarāja (Ajmer) with her two sons (Prithvīrāja and Harirāja). Somesvara (No. 29) thus became king. Where the palaces of Vigraharāja stood he founded a town and named it after his father, to wipe off the blot cast by the murder of Arnorāja by his (Arnorāja's) eldest son. His brother, Vigraharāja, had constructed

[1] Vigraharaja himself was a great poet and was a patron of learning His work, *Harakeli Nataka*, parts of which inscribed on stone slabs are preserved in the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, is described in the *Indian Antiquary*, vol. xx, p. 201, where Dr. Kielhorn says: "Actual and undoubted proof is here afforded to us of the fact that powerful Hindu rulers of the past were eager to compete with Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti for poetical fame." According to the Bijolian inscription (verse 22) Vigraharaja conquered Delhi. The Delhi Siwalik Pillar inscription of A. D. 1164 says that he conquered the country between the Vindhya and the Himalaya Mountains and cleared the country of Aryavarta of the Musalmans and again made it Aryavarta, the abode of Aryas. The *Prabandhakosa* calls him "the defeater of Turushkas" (vide *Gaudavaho*, Introduction, p. cxxxvii).

[2] An (unpublished) inscription dated the Jaishta Vadi 13, v. s. 1225 (A. D. 1168), on a pillar in the temple of Rūthi Rani at Dhod, in the Jahazpur district of Mewar, says that Prithviraja (Prithvibhata) "obtained a victory over the king of Sakambhari by the strength of his arms". This plainly shows that he defeated Amargangeya, the son and successor of Vigraharaja IV (Visaladeva) and took back the kingdom his father (Jugdeva) had lost to Vigraharaja. This inscription says that Suhavadevi was the queen of Prithvibhata.

[3] The kingdom of Ajmer was so called in those days. The Hindi translation Sawalakh, or Siwalikh, is used by Musalman writers to denote this country.

in Ajmer the same number of temples as the hill forts he had conquered ; in their midst Somesvara built a temple of Vaidyanath, which towered above them all. In it he placed an effigy of his father on horseback, with his own effigy in front, facing his father's. He placed the images of Brahma, Visnu, and Siva in one place in a temple. He built five temples, and so Ajmer vied with Meru, which boasted of its five *Kalpbrakhshes.* He built so many temples in Gaugnak (Gangwana, 9 miles north east of Ajmer) and other places that the population of the City of Gods dwindled away. Somesvara then departed to see his father in Heaven, where all came to receive him from Chāhāmāna to Prithīvībhata except the parricide (Jugdeva), who was in hiding in Hell. Somesvara went to Śivaloka. Before leaving this world he had appointed the Devi (Kārpurdevī) to protect his son in his childhood.

The ninth sarga says that during Kārpurdevī's regency the city was so densely populated and there were so many gardens, tanks, and wells, that not more than one-tenth of the earth was visible to the sun, and water in the wells was only two cubits from the ground surface, Kārpurdevī also founded a town. Her father's name was Achalarāja. Prithvīrāja's minister was named Kādamb Vàsa,[1] who, like Hanumāna, had a projecting chin, and was as able and loyal as that famous servant of Rāma. He always guarded the six virtues of Prithvīrāja, and sent the imperial armies in all directions to add to the glory of his sovereign. All the different branches of learning which have their abode on the two thousand tongues of the king of serpents (Vāsuki) began to unite and come to Prithvīrāja.

The emperor was extremely handsome in body, and Kāmadeva (Cupid) took service with him so that

[1] Dr. Buhler read it as Kadamb Vam, but the transcript obtained by me has Kadamb Vass.

he might learn archery from the king and lose all fear of Siva. When Prithvīrāja came to be of age, the knowledge of all such sciences and arts as a king should have, came spontaneously to him.

In order to find out how Prithvīrāja, the son of his elder brother's daughter, though possessing only two arms, was able to protect the world, Bhuvanaik Malla came to the emperor. Varuna's direction (west) was thus purified by the dust of Bhuvanaik Malla's lotus feet. He was reckless of his life in battle, and gave away in charity all the wealth that came to him. He did not go to the Deccan forcibly to bring away jewels from that country, as he thought that his doing so would produce agitation in the mind of the Brahmin Agastya,[1] who lived in that country. Prithvīraja and Harirāja were incarnations of Rāma and Lakṡmana; and, as Rama and Laksmana suffered trouble owing to Meghnad's *sarpapāsh* (serpent noose) and Garuda eventually saved them from the *pāsh* (noose). so, in this birth, Bhuvanaik Malla, the incarnation of Garuda, ever served Rama and Laksmana (Prithvīrāj and Harirāja) loyally. As the daughter of the Himālayās (Pārvati) with her two sons (Kārtika Swāmi and Ganapati) was adorned by Menāka[2] with his wings, so Kārpurdevī, with the support of this hero—the glory of her father's house—was adorned by her two sons. Like Garuda, Bhuvanaik Malla extirpated the Nāgas [3] Just as Rāma, with the help of Garuda and Hanumāna crossed the sea and did other things, so Prithvīrāja, with the help of Hanumana-like Kādamb Vāsa and Garuda-like Bhuvanaik Malla, did many things for the welfare of the people.

[1]The sage Agastya was the first Arya who is said to have crossed the Vindhya Mountains and gone to the Deccan.

[2]Indra had removed the wings of all mountains except Menāka, the son of the Himalayas.

[3]Nagas evidently means the Nāgavansi tribe.

The tenth sarga says that when Prithvīrāja attained manhood, several Princesses began to desire to marry him. Good fortune furnished him with opportunities to undertake several wars. Nāgarjuna, son of Vigraharāja—Vigraharāja, who was of extraordinary prowess and valour, and whose prosperity was unsurpassed by any king—desirous of acquiring territory, took possession of Gudpur.[1] Prithvīrāja, without taking Kadamb Vasa or Bhuvanaik Malla with him, started with a large army of horsemen, infantry, elephants, and camels to attack Nāgārjuna, and laid siege to Gudpur. Nagarjuna, relinquishing the *dharma* (duty) of a warrior, fled from the fort, and Prithvīraja slew his warriors and conquered the fort. Prithvīraja brought to Ajmer the wife and the mother of Nāgārjuna, and placed the heads of his enemies on the battlements of the fort of Ajmer.

The land of the North-West, where horses abound the beaf-eating Mlechha, named Ghori, who had captured Garjani (Ghazni) hearing that Prithvīrāja had vowed to exterminate the Mlechhas, sent an ambassador to Ajmer. This man had a wide forehead, but no hair on his head. The colour of his beard, eyebrows, and the eyelashes was of the grapes that come from Ghazni, and his speech was like that of wild birds ; it had no cerebrals. His complexion was like that of a leper, and he wore a long *choga* (A few pages here are missing.) Rājas took shelter in fortresses from fear of him. When these fiends in the shape of men (Mlechhas) took possession of Nadul (Nadole), the warriors of Prithvīrāja took up their bows and the emperor became angry and resolved to lay Ghori's glory to dust.

In the eleventh sarga, Kadamb Vasa submits to the king that there is no occasion for him to become angry as it shows no strength in Garuda to threaten such

[1]I am unable to identify this Gudpur. The affair may be a rebellion of a son of Vigraharaja IV.

serpents as even a camel would swallow. He says that just as Sundh and Upsundh destroyed each other for the sake of Tilotmā, so the enemy will ruin himself by his desire to possess the emperor's wealth. The minister has not finished when the Pratihāra (chamberlain) announces the arrival of a messenger from Gujrāt with a letter. Hearing this, the Bharatesvara (the emperor of India) orders him to be called in. The chamberlain presents the messenger, who informs Prithvīrāja that the king of Gujrāt has utterly routed the Ghori forces. On hearing of the rout of the Ghori forces, Prithvībhatta, the chief of the bards submits to the emperor that he must rejoice that he has got such a minister as Kādamb Vāsa, for the Ghori has been destroyed without any imperial effort. He then gives all account of Tilotmā. The emperor bestows gifts on the messenger and dismisses him. Prithvīrāja then retires to his picture gallery, where Prithvībhatta shows him pictures illustrating all the various incidents contained in the Rāmāyana, and describes the emperor's deeds in his former birth. As the emperor looks at the portrait of Tilotmā, Kamadeva (Cupid) overpowers him and he begins to long for Tilotmā. It now becomes noon and the emperor leaves the gallery wounded by Cupid's arrows.

In the twelfth sarga, Padmanābha, the minister of Vigraharāja, introduces a Kashmiri poet to Prithvībhatta the bard, who has come out of the gallery in deep thought, and having heard someone recite a verse saying that everything comes to him who strives to get it, inquires who the reciter is. Padmanābha says that the reciter is a poet named Jayanaka come from Kashmir, the seat of learning and is a profound scholar. The poet then explains why he left his native country. In the last leaf of the MS. (No. 83) which is much mutilated, there are a few broken sentences probably meaning that the poet knew six languages

and had been directed by the goddess of learning to go and serve Prithvīrāja, the incarnation of Visnu.

How much more there was in the complete poem we have at present no means of knowing. But there is no doubt that the complete poem contained many more cantos. The very name of the poem, "Prithvīrāja Vijaya," shows that it was composed to celebrate the victories of Prithvīrāja, the most important of which—the great victory of Tarain[1] near Thaneshwara in A. D. 1191, when Sultan Muizz-ud-dīn bin Sām (Shahāb-ud-dīn Ghori) fled from the field badly wounded, and his great army was utterly routed—was but the last of a series of brilliant exploits which have shed lustre on the Rajput race, that still shines undimmed after seven centuries, and have made the name Prithvīrāja a synonym of chivalry and heroism.

[1]Duff's *Chronology of India*, p. 167. Also Raverty's *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*, p. 460.

JĀNGALADEŚA AND ITS CAPITAL AHICHHATRAPUR[1]

I. JĀNGALADEŚA

Where'er we tread 'tis haunted, holy ground;
No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
But one vast realm of wonder spreads around,
And all the muse's tales seem truly told.

BYRON, *Childe Harold.*

JANGALADESA is mentioned in the Māhabhārata but it is not stated where it was situated (Mahābhārata, Bhishma Parva, Adhyāya 9, 39[2]). The physical characteristics of Jāngaladeśa as given in Sanskrit works (*Śabdakalpadruma Kosa*, Vol. II, p. 529[3]) are "Scarcity of water and grass; high winds; intense heat, and abundant grain production after rains." It is also stated (See *Bhāva Prakāsha*, and *Śabdakalpadruma Kosa*, Vol. II, p. 529[4]) that in Jāngaladeśa, the sky remains clear and such trees grow as require little watering for their growth; for instance, *Śamī* (शमी) (prosopis spicigera), *Karira* (Capparis aphylla), *Bilva* (Aegle marmelos), *Arka* (Calotropis procera), *Pilu* (Salvadora persica), and *Karkandhu.*

[1]Paper read before the First Indian Oriental Conference, held at Poona on 6 November 1919 A. D.

[2]तत्रेमे कुरुपांचालाः शाल्वा माद्रेयजांगलाः ।

[3]स्वल्पोदकतृणो यस्तु प्रवातः प्रचुरातपः ।
स ज्ञेयो जांगलो देशो बहुधान्यादिसंयुतः ॥

[4]आकाशशुभ्र उच्चश्च स्वल्पपानीयपादपः ।
शमीकरीरबिल्वार्कपीलुकर्कन्धुसंकुलः ॥

The above description shows that Jāngaladeśa must have been situated somewhere in the sandy plains of Rajputana, where, owing to comparative scarcity of rainfall, the sky is clear; where water and grass are scarce; where high winds blow and constantly shift sand-hills from one place to another; where intense heat keeps the air in constant vibration during a part of the day in the hot season; and where the principal trees are the *Śamī* (*Khejda*), (the *Karria Ker*) and the *Pilu*. A part of the present Bikaner State in Rajputana is still termed Jāngalu which is the Prākrita form of Jāngala The kings of Bikaner, evidently because they ruled over the country which in ancient times was known as Jāngaladeśa and a portion of which is still known as Jāngalu are called by the *Bhāts*, (the bards of Rajputana), as "*Jangaladhar Patasāh*," which means Pādshah, or king of the Jāngaladeśa. "Jai Jangaldhar Bādshah" is the inscription borne on the coat of arms of the Rulers of Bikaner, and this would show that a portion at least of the old Jāngaladeśa is incorporated in the dominions over which the Mahārājās of Bikaner hold sway.

Mr. Nando Lal Dey has not included in his "*Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval India*," the name of Jāngaladeśa, but mentions *Kuru Jāngala* as one name which he describes as:

"A forest country situated in Sirhind, north west of Hastināpura. It was called Śrīkanṭhadeśa during the Buddhist period. Its Capital was Bilāspura. It was included in Kurukshetra" (p. 15).

4. This view of Babu Nando Lal Dey cannot be accepted as correct for two reasons. In the first place, there is no warrant for the assumption that Kuru Jāngala was the name of one country, for the Māhābhārata regards Kuru and Jāngala as two separate countries (Māhābhārata, cited above). Secondly, the Kuru and Jāngala countries were never known as

Srīkanṭhadeśa. Banbhaṭṭa in his *Harshacharita* (translated into English by E. B. Cowell M. A. and F. W. Thomas, M.A., p. 73 and note 6) gives the name of Harsha's ancestral kingdom as Srikanṭha, by which is meant the Kingdom of Thāneśvra.

The compound terms, "Kuru Jangala" and "Kuru Pānchāla" which occur in Sanskrit works, indicate a certain relationship between the two component parts of the two terms, and evidently the same relationship exists between Kuru and Jāngala as between Kuru and Pānchāla. Kuru and Pānchāla were admittedly two separate *deśa* or territories which lay adjacent to each other. Kuru and Jāngala must similarly have been two separate territories and the term Kuru Jāngala means or expresses a political, economic, or geographical unit or idea as much as the other term "Kuru Pānchāla." As Pānchāla was situated on one (the eastern) side of Kuru, it is probable that Jāngala was also situated on another side (south) of it and both Kuru and Jāngala formed one portion of Bhāratavarsha for some administrative or geographical purpose.

The physical characteristrics of Jāngaladeśa given above and the use of the term "Kuru Jāngala" lead us to believe that the country lay towards the south or south-west side of Kuru, comprising parts of the Bikaner and Jaipur States and the northern part of Mārwār territory. The road from Dwarka to Hastinapura is said to have passed along these parts, the journey terminating with the passing up of the Kuru-Jāngala in the Bhāgavata. The present day road seems to keep the same course. Kuru-Jāngala may mean Jāngala adjoining Kuru in contradistinction to other portions of Jāngala or other Jāngalas.

The boundaries of countries vary from time to time, and expand and contract, as the political power of their rulers increases or decreases. It is therefore

difficult to lay down with any precision, the limits of the Jāngaladeśa. We know that the Chauhāns ruled over a large part of Rajputana from the seventh to the twelfth century A. D. and that the country they ruled over was called Jāngaladeśa or Sapādalaksha (one and quarter lakh). Of these two names, Jāngaladeśa is the more ancient one as it is found in the Mahābhārata, while the other, Śapādalaksha, came into prominence only during the Chauhān times. It also appears that the Chauhāns originally ruled over the country round the town of Nāgor, for that part of Rājputana is still called "Savālak" (vernacular form of Sapādalaksha) As the power of the Chauhāns increased, their kingdom expanded; and when Sāmbhar and Ajmer became their capitals, the whole of the country over which their rule extended came to be called Sapādalaksha or Jāngaladeśa. The eastern (or some) part of Mewar, the major parts of the present Jodhpur, Bikaner, and Jaipur States, the whole of Ajmer-Merwara and Kishengarh, were included in the Sapādalakśha country. That part of Mewar which lies to the east of Chitor and which includes the districts of Māndalgarh, Jahāzpur, Bijolian and others, was under the rule of the Chauhāns, when Ajmer was their capital, and hence the Mewar fortress of Māndalgarh (Mandalākara) is recorded as situated in the Sapādalaksha country. The *Dharmāmrita Śāstra* of Âshādhar, who flourished about A. D. 1230, says:—

श्रीमानस्ति सपादलक्षविषयः शाकंभरीभूषण :
तत्र श्रीरतिधाममंडलकरं नामास्ति दुर्गं महत् ।

(Prasasti at the end of the work.)

"There is a country (called) Sapādalaksha the ornament of which is Śākambhari (Sāmbhar); there is in it a great fort called Mandalākara" (Māndalgarh in Mewar), *vide* Dr. Bhandarkar's Report for 1883-84, on the Search for Sanskrit Manuscripts, p. 390; see also pp. 103-6 of the Preface.

The principal victories gained by the Chāulukya (Solanki) king Kumārapāla (A. D. 1143 to 1174) were three, and they were achieved by defeating, (1) Arnorāja (Ānāka or Ānā) the Chauhān king of Sapādalaksha or Jāngaladeśa, (Bombay Gazetteer, Vol. I, Part I, pp. 184-85); and (2) King Ballāla of Mālwa (Ibid p. 185); and (3), Mallikārjuna, the king of Konkan (Ibid, pp. 185-86). The inscription of the Vikrama Samvat 1207 (A. D. 1150), found in the Mokalji's temple at Chitor (Mewar), and published in the *Epigraphia Indica* Vol. II, pp. 422-3, while describing the victory of Kumārpāla over Arnorāja (or Ānāka) the Chauhān King of Ajmer," says:—

महीभृन्निकुंजेषु शाकंभरीशः
प्रियापुत्रलोके न शाकंभरीशः ।
सपादलक्षमामर्द्य नम्रीकृतभयानकं: ।
स्वयमयान्महीनाथो ग्राम शालिपुराभिधे ॥
सन्निवेश्य शिंबिरं पृथु तत्र त्रासिता सहन भूपातिचक्रम्
चित्रकूटगिरिपुष्कलशोभां द्रष्टुमार नृपतिः कुतुकेन ।

" When the King Kumārpāla had defeated the King (Anāk) of Śākambhari, (Sāmbhar, the old Capital of the Chauhāns of Ajmer) and devastated the Sapādalaksha country (line eleven), he went to Salipura (line twelve) (Sālera, four miles from the Chitor hill), and having pitched his great camp there, he came to view the glorious beauty of the Chitrakuta (Chitor) mountain."

This war took place about *V. S.* 1207 and was undertaken by Kumārpāla to avenge[1] the insult and ill-treatment to which Kumarapāla's sister, Dēvaladēvi, the queen of Arnorāja, was subjected by her husband. Dēvalādēvi was offended by some remark of Arnorāja and accused him of want of manners as he belonged to

[1] *Indian Antiquary* for 1912, p. 196.

to the Jāngala country. This enraged Arnorāja who gave her a kick. She left Ajmer and went to her brother, who invaded Ajmer (*Kumārpāla Charita by* Jinamandanopādhyāya).

The Viśalpur inscription of Emperor Prithvirāja, dated Samvat 1244 (A. D. 1187), calls Prithvirāja the King of Sapādalaksha country. It says :—

समस्तराजावलीसमलंकृतपरमभट्टारक ।
महाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वर श्री पृथ्वीराज -
राजदेवराज्ये तस्मिन् काले संवत्
१२४४ श्रावणपूर्वे सपादलक्षे...

" During the reign of Mahārāja Dhiraja Prithvirāja-deva in Sapādalaksha " etc. (Cunningham's Archæological Survey Reports, Vol. VI, Plate XXI).

Merutuṅga मेरुतुंग in his *Prabandha Chintāmani*, written in V. S. 1361, (A. D. 1304), calls the kingdom of the Chauhāns, Sapādalaksha, in a number of places. (1) While describing the invasion of Gujrāt by the Chauhān King, Vigraharāja, between 973 and 996 A. D. Merutunga says:—

कस्मिन्नप्यवसरे सपादलक्षीयक्षितिपतिः
श्रीमूलराजमभिषेणयितुं गुर्जरदेशसन्धौ समाजगाम ।

"On a certain occasion the king of the country of Sapādalaksha came to the border of the land of Gujrāt to attack Mulrāja. (C. H. Tawney's translation, p. 23). (2) The *Prithvirāja Vijaya* (Canto V, verse 51) describes this war, as also the *Hammir Mahākāvya* (Canto II).

(3) The *Prabandha Chintāmani*, in the course of its account of the invasion of Gujrāt by Arnorāja, undertaken (about Samvat 1200 to 1202) to support the claims of Bāhada, son of Udayana, (उदयन) and the adopted son of Siddharāja Jayasinha, to the throne of Anhilwārā against Kumārpāla, says that "Bāhaḍa,

despising Kumārpāla, made himself a soldier of the King of Sapādalaksha country. He, desiring to make war on Kumārpāla, having won over to his side all the officers in those parts with bribes, attentions and gifts, bringing with him the King of the Sapādalaksha country, surrounded with a large army, arrived at the borders of Gujrāt." (*Prabandha Chintāmani* by Tawney, p. 121).

(4) The *Dvyāsrya* of Hemchandra, written about A.D. 1160, describing this war, says:—

"The Raja of Sapādalaksha, whose name was Ānnā, when he heard of the death of Jayasinha, though he had been a servant of that monarch, now thought the time was come for making himself known" (*Indian Antiquary* for 1912, p. 195); also Forbes' *Rasmala*, p. 142, which gives the Dvyāśrya's account of the war. Thus, while both the *Prabandha Chintāmani* and the *Dvyāsrya* style Ānāk or Arnorāja as the King of the Sapādalaksha country. Someśvara in his *Kirtikaumudi*, (Canto II Verse 46) written about A. D. 1225, (Vikrama Samvat 1282) calls this enemy of Kumārpāla "Jāngalakshonipāla" or the Lord of Jangaladeśa[1]) while in his other work, *Surathotsava* (Canto XIV, Verse 22), he calls[2] the same Ānāji "Sapādalakshapati" or King of Sapādalaksha."

Arisimha in his *Sukrita* सुकृत *samkirtana* (Canto II, verse 43) calls Arnorāja as "Jāngalesh or the King of the Jangaladeśa." It is thus clear that the kingdom over which the Chauhāns of Ajmer ruled was called Sapādalaksha as well as Jāngaladeśa; that *Sapādalaksha* and *Jāngaladesa* were not two separate countries but one and the same country, and that the country known in ancient India as Jangaladeśa came in latter times to

[1] जाङ्गलक्षोणिपालेन व्याचक्षयौः पैररपि (canto. II, 46);

[2] हस: सोपि सपादलक्षनृपतिः पादानतिं शिक्षित: (canto XV, 22)

be called Sapādalaksha. That the country continued to be called Siwalak—the Hindi rendering of Sapādlaksha—even during the Pathān times is clear from the *Tabqati Nasiri*, which always terms the territory of Nāgor as Siwalak country.

II. THE CAPITAL OF JANGALADESA

The name of the Capital of Jāngaladeśa is not recorded. Mahamahopadhyaya P. Gauri Shanker Hira Chand Ojha, during a visit paid in 1905 A. D. to Mandal (in Mewar) to see the collection of manuscripts and copies of old inscriptions, left by Yati Gyānchandra, *guru* of Colonel James Tod—the illustrious author of the *Annals and Antiquities of Rājasthan*,—found in the collection, a paper containing the names of twenty-six different countries and their Capitals. No. 10 on that list is Jāngaladeśa and its Capital (or principal town) is stated to be "Ahichhatra". Now, there are more towns than one which bear this name: *vide Bombay Gazetteer*, Vol. I, Part II, 560, note 11. The best known town which bears this name and which the famous Chinese pilgrim Hiouen Thsang calls "O-hi-ch-ta-lo" (*Buddhist Records of the Western World*, Vol. I, p. 200) was the capital of the northern Pāñchāla country, the ruins of which were stated by General Cunningham (Cunningham's Archæological Survey Reports. Vol. I, p. 255) to be still existing near Rāmnagar, 20 miles from Badāun in the United Provinces. This Ahichhatra, however, could not have been the capital of Jāngaladeśa. The capital of Jāngaladeśa must have existed somewhere in the heart of Rajputana.

The geneologies of the Chauhān rulers of Sambhar and Ajmer declare that the founder of that family was one Vāsudeva and his first visit to Sāmbhar or Śākambharī is described in the third and the fourth cantos of the epic poem, *Prithvirāja Vijaya*, the most reliable work on the early history of the Chauhāns.

This account[1] of the origin of the Salt Lake of Sambhar shows that Vāsudeva had come to that place from some distance, that the journey had caused him fatigue, that he had been a stranger to the name Sākambharī, that Śākambharī or Sāmbhar was not the capital of the Chauhāns till Vāsudeva's reign and that the Chauhān Kings came to be called "Śākambharīshwara" (Lord of Śākambharī) sometime after Vāsudeva's reign. We have now to see which town was the residence of the Chauhān Kings before Śākambharī became their Capital. In the Chauhān geneologies, the name of Samantarāja (or Samanta) comes next to Vāsudeva. The *Prithvirāja Vijaya* too (Sarga 5, Sloka 7) mentions Sāmantarāja and says that he was Vāsudeva's kinsman and successor.

The Bijolian Rock inscription of the time of the Chauhān King *Somesvara* dated the Phalgun Vadi 3rd, Samvat 1226 (A.D. 1170) gives the Chauhān geneology from Sāmanta to Someśvara and states that the capital of Sāmanta was Ahichhatrapur. (Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. LV, Part I, page 41). The *Prithvirāja Vijaya's* account of Śākambharī has already shown us that Vāsudeva's Capital was some town other than Śākambharī, and that it was situated at some distance from it. We have now the following facts before us:—

(1) That the Capital of the Chauhan king Sāmantrāja was Ahichhatrapur.

(2) That Ahichhatrapur was a town distinct from Śākambharī.

(3) That Ahichhatrapur, the capital of the early Chauhāns, was situated at a distance from Sāmbhar but within a day's hard ride from it. The town that best answers to this discription is Nagor (in Mārwār) which is an abbreviated form of Nāgapur. This

[1]For this account see pp. 195-6 supra.

town is situated at a distance of about 65 miles to the northwest of Sāmbhar. The name of Nāgapur means the same thing as Ahichhatrapur (Nāgapur means 'the city of the Serpent'; and Ahichhatrapur, the city whose *chhatra* or protector is the serpent). Nagapur and Ahichhatrapur are thus synonyms. In Sanskrit, different names having the same significance are sometimes given to the same object. For instance, while the Harsha stone inscription of A. D. 973 calls the successor of the Chauhān King Guvaka as Chandrarāja (*Epigraphia Indica* Vol. II p. 117), the Bijolian Rock inscription of A. D 1170 (quoted above) calls him "Śaśinṛipa, "both meaning the "Moon King."

The first Capital of the Chauhān Kingdom of Sapādalaksha must therefore have been Nāgapur or Nāgor. The territory round Nagor is still called "Svālak" (Sapādalaksha) by its people, and as Jāngaladeśa is the ancient name of Sapādalaksha territory, its capital Ahichhatrapur was no other town than the modern Nāgor in Mārwār, which is a place of great antiquity.

SAPADLAKSHA[1]

O mountains, give me of your strength!
Above the clouds ye rise,
A huge impact of Titan force;
I look on you with eyes
That drink deep thought: May I that thought
In action realize!

ANONYMOUS.

PROFESSOR Sir Jadunath Sarkar, in his review of my paper on the *Prithviraja Vijaya* in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, published at p. 318 of the *Modern Review* for September 1913, says:—"He (Mr. Sarda) takes Sapadlaksha (or Sawalakh) as another name for the kingdom of Ajmer: but Mr. D. R. Bhandarkar holds a different view. (See *Indian Antiquary*, January 1911)."

But the view expressed by Mr. Bhandarkar in the *Indian Antiquary* for 1911 does not appear to support the above remark of the learned professor. The fact that the kingdom of Ajmer and Sāmbhar during the Chauhan times and even in the times of the Pathan rulers of Delhi was called the *Sapadlaksha* country admits of no doubt and is beyond the pale of controversy.

It was P. Bhagwanlal Indraji who nearly forty years ago indentified the Sapadlaksha country with the tracts now known as Gurhwal, Kumaon &c. (*Vide*, *Indian Antiquary* for 1879, Vol. VIII), but Mr. D. R. Bhandarkar, though he holds that the

[1]From the *Modern Review* (Calcutta) for December 1913 A. D.

name Sapadlaksha had originally been applied to the above-named, tracts admits that "there can be no doubt that the kingdom of the Chahmans (Chauhans) was called Sapadalksha".........*Indian Antiquary* for 1912, p. 29, ft. note.

He also says:—"From inscriptions and early Muhammadan writers it seems that Sapadlaksha included Hansi in the Punjab, Ajmer, Mandor the Capital of Marwar, six miles north of Jodhpur, and Mandalgarh in Mewar. All this was exactly the territory held by the Chauhans and there cannot be even the shadow of a doubt as to this province being called Sapadlaksha only after their occupation."—*Indian Antiquary* for 1912, p. 29.

Whether the country came to be called Sapadlaksha after its occupation by the Chauhans or before that event took place is another matter; but it is clear that even in Mr. D. R. Bhandarkar's opinion the Chauhan Kingdom of Ajmer during the times of which the *Prithviraja Vijaya* speaks, was known as the Sapadlaksha country.

I now give below a few out of the many references found in old Sanskrit works and inscriptions to show that the Chauhan kingdom of Ajmer and Sambhar was known as the Sapadlaksha country.

The *Prabandha Chintamani*, written in A D. 1304 (v.s. 1361) by Meerutunga Acharya mentions Sapadlaksha as the country of the Chauhan kings of Ajmer and Sambhar in at least eight different places. Describing the invasion of Gujrat while Mulraja was king of that country, Meerutunga says:—

कस्मिन्नप्यवसरे सपादलक्षीय क्षितिपतिः श्री मूलराजमभिषेणयितुं गुर्जरदेश-सन्धौ समाजगाम । (p. 40)

"On a certain occasion the king of the country of Sapadlaksha came to the border of the land of Gujrat to attack Mulraja."—Tawney's translation, p. 23.

This war is described in the *Prithviraja Vijaya* (Canto v) and the *Hammir Mahakavya* (written about the beginning of the fifteenth century A.D.); and in both, the name of the king of the Sapadlaksha country is given as Vigraharaja. The *Hammir Mahakavya* says:—

अथौद्दिदीपेन य विग्रहाय बद्धाग्रहो विग्रहराजभूपः ।
अप्युग्र वीरव्रत वीर वीर संसेव्यमान क्रमपादयुग्मम् ।
श्रीमूलराजं समरे निहत्य यो गुर्जरं जर्जरतामनैषीत् ॥ (Canto II)

Dr. Buhler and Mr. Tawney both identify Sapadlaksha with the kingdom of Sambhar in Eastern Rajputana. *Vide*, Tawney's *Prabandha Chintamani*, p. 120, ft. note; also p. 23, ft. note.

Again, describing the war between Ānak or Annaji (also called Arnoraja) the Chauhan king of Ajmer, who built the famous Anasagar lake at Ajmer (*Vide*, *Ajmer: Historical and Descriptive*, pp. 34 and 152) and Kumarpala king of Gujrat, the author of the *Prabandha Chintamani* says:—

तदनु श्री चालुक्य भूपतिना श्रीमदानाकनामा सपादलक्षनृपः शक्षसज्जो
भवेत्यभिहितः । (P. 199)

which Principal Tawney thus translates:—"Then the Chalukya king said to the king of the Sapadlaksha country, named Anak."—Tawney's *Prabandha Chintamani*, p. 121.

The *Dvyasraya* of Jainacharya Hem Chandra written about A.D. 1160, describing this war between Kumarpala and Annaji says that "the Raja of Sapadlaksha whose name was Ānna, when he heard of the death of Jai Singh, now thought the time was come for making himself known."—*Indian Antiquary* for 1911, p. 195. Also Forbes' *Rasmala*, p. 142.

The *Prabandha Chintamani* calls the famous Prithviraja Chauhan "the king of Sapadlaksha Country." See Tawney's translation, p. 188. Also p. 190, where the battle between Shahabuddin Ghori and Prithviraja is described. The original says:—

अथ कदाचित् तस्य म्लेच्छपतेः सूनुर्नृपतिः पितुर्वैरस्य स्मरन् सपादलक्षक्षिति-
पतिर्विग्रहकाम्यया ...पृथ्वीराजस्तदातदनुपादिकी भावं भजन् । (p. 323)

Trans: "Then once upon a time the son of that king of the Mlechhas, being now himself king remembering his father's feud and being desirous of making war on the king of the Sapadlaksha country came with his host, but that army was driven away by the arrows of the valiant bowmen that formed the advance guard of Prithviraja's army."

Another old Sanskrit work of historical value, the *Kirti Kaumadi*, written about A. D. 1225 (V.S. 1282) by the poet Someshwara who lived at the court of the kings of Anhalwara Patan, describing the war between Annaji king of Ajmer and Siddharaja Jai Singh the predecessor of Kumarpala of Gujrat calls Annaji, the lord of Sākambhari (Canto II) and then in his other work the *Surothotsava Kavya* (Canto XV, V. 22) calls the same Annaji सपादलक्षनृपतिः "King of Sapadlaksha." He says:—

तृप्तः सोऽपि सपादलक्षनृपातिः पादानतिः शिक्षितः ।
श्री सिद्धक्षितिपेन ...... । (Canto XV, V.22)

Another important Sanskrit work, the *Dharmamrita Sāstra* of Ashadhara, who flourished about A. D. 1230, says:—

श्रीमानस्ति सपादलक्षविषयः शाकम्भरीभूषणस्तत्र श्रीरतिधाममण्डलकरं
नामास्ति दुर्गं महत् ।

"There is a country (called) Sapadlaksha the ornament of which is Sākambhari (Sambhar);

there is a fort called Mandalkara (Mandalgarh) in Mewar."—*Vide*, Dr. Bhandarkar's Report for 1883-84, p. 39. See also Preface pp. 103-6. And Mr. D. R. Bhandarkar says: "Sākambhari is no doubt Sambhar, the capital of the Chauhan kingdom"—*Indian Antiquary* for 1911, p. 29, ft. note 15.

If we refer to the inscriptions of the Chauhan kings of Ajmer and Sambhar we find the kingdom of the Chauhans called the Sapadlaksha country in a number of them.

The Chitorgarh inscription (*Epigraphia Indica*, Vol, II, p. 423) says :—

महीभृद्विकुञ्जेषु शाकम्भरीश:.........सपादलक्षयामर्घे नम्रीकृतभयानक: ।

Trans: "When this king (Kumarpala) had defeated the rulers of Sakambhari and devastated the Sapadlaksha country, he went to a place named Salipura &c."

The Visalpur inscription of Emperor Prithviraja dated Samvat 1244 (A. D. 1187) calls Prithviraja the king of Sapadlaksha territory. It says:—

समस्तराजावलीसमलंकृत परमभट्टारक महराजाधिराज परमेश्वर श्री पृथ्वी-राज देवराज्ये तस्मिन् काले संवत् १२४४ श्रावण पूर्व्वं सपादलक्षे.........।

Trans: "During the reign of Maharajadhiraja Prithviraja Deva, Sapadlaksha &c.&c."—Cunningham's *Archæological Survey Report*, Vol. VI., plate XXI.

Even the Muhammadan historians have called the country containing Sambhar, Ajmer and Nagor as the Siwalikh country. Siwalikh or Sawalakh is only a Hindi rendering of Sapadlaksha. The *Tabqati Nasiri* of Minhaji Siraj, written about A. D. 1259, mentions the Siwalikh country in more than a dozen places. He mentions "Naghwar (Nagor) in the territory of Siwalikh" and "Naghaur in Siwalikh."—Major Raverty's translation, pp. 110 and 200.

Speaking of the conquest of Ajmer by Sultan Muizuddin-bin-Sam (Shahbuddin Ghori) the author says:—"The seat of Government, Ajmer, with the whole of the Siwalikh territory &c." were subjugated—p. 468. Further on, the author says: "In 624 H. he marched against the fort of Mandawar (Mandor, six miles from Jodhpur) within the limits of the Siwalikh territory."—p. 61.

ŚIVĀJI

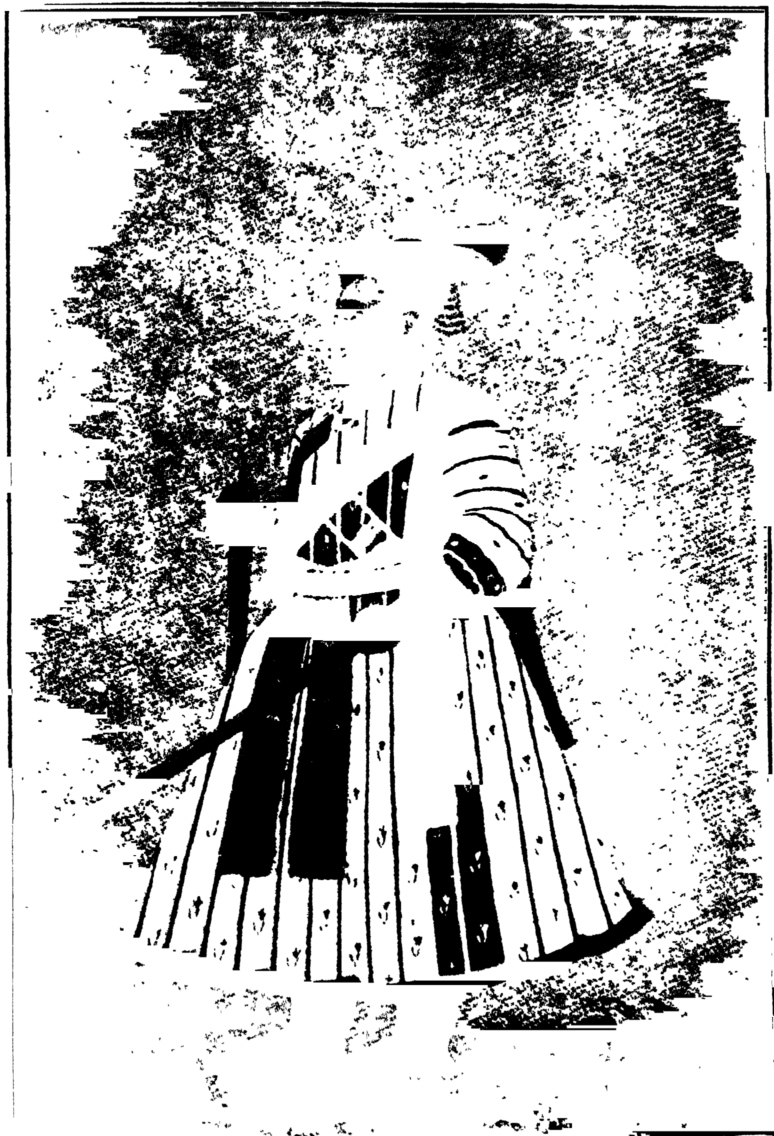
A SISODIĀ RAJPUT

Wherever the bright Sun of heaven shall shine,
His honour and the greatness of his name
Shall be, and make new nations.

SHAKESPEARE, *King Henry VIII.*

CHHATRAPATI Mahārāja Śivāji was one of the greatest Hindu sovereigns who reigned in Medieval India. His reign is a landmark in Indian History. He was one of those great men whom nature throws out into the world at various times to fulfil various missions. Sivaji was a military commander of the first rank; and, had India been the Europe of the eighteenth century, he might have rivalled even Napolean Bonaparte in glory. As a statesman, he would do honor to any country: as a hero, he would be worshipped by any people. As the embodiment of powers which ushered in a new epoch in India and marked the end of an old one, he holds a place in history which time cannot efface, nor subsequent events belittle. He will ever remain an ornament to the Hindu race, and a source of pride and inspiration to generations to come.

Students of Indian history naturally feel interested in the origin and history of the family and the clan to which Śivāji belonged. Curiously enough, the question of Śivāji's ancestry arose in his lifetime. After he had carved out an independent Hindu kingdom, a strict and pious Hindu that he was, he determined to perform his Coronation ceremony in accordance with the traditional Vedic rites, which govern such functions



SIVAJI

From a Painting in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.

By the Courtesy of

in Rajputana. Now, according to orthodox Brahminnical notions, kingship is a calling exclusively for the Kshtriyas, and a Kshtriya alone is entitled to the *Rajyabhishek* or the Coronation ceremony.

The question whether Sivaji may be crowned according to Vedic rites arose owing to the peculiar circumstances of the Deccan. As the knowledge of the Vedas declined and the Puranas took their place as the religious books of the Hindus, the Brahmins accepted the Puranas as authority in all religious matters. The following text common to the *Matsya*, *Vāya* and *Brahmanda* Puranas was accepted by the Brahmins as the final authority in the matter of kingship:—

महानंदिसुतश्चापि शूद्रायां कलिकांशजः ।
उत्पत्स्यते महापद्मः [illegible] नृपः ॥
ततः प्रभृति राजानो भविष्याः शूद्रयोनयः ।

Matsya Purana, Adhyaya 272, *Śl.* 18-22.

"A son of Mahānandin by a Sudra will be born a king, Mahāpadma (Nanda), who will exterminate all Kshtriyas. Thereafter, kings will be of Sudra origin".[1]

The Brahmins of the Deccan began to hold that in that part of India there had remained only two *Varnas*, the Brahmins and the Sudras; and as the Kshtriyas and Vaishas were inconspicuous in the Deccan, the view of the Deccan Brahmins was gradually accepted.

It must be remembered that the term Mahratta (Prākrit: Maharatha; Sans: Maharashtriya) is a purely geographical, and not a generic or ethnic or caste term and signifies only inhabitants or natives of the Maharashtra country, just as the Marwarees are the inhabitants of Marwar, the Gujratees of Gujrat, the Punjabees of Punjāb, though there are Brahmins, Rajputs, Vaishas and Sudras amongst them all. As a matter of fact, there are a number of Rājput or

[1]Pargiter: *The Purana Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age*, page 25.

Kshtriya families amongst the Mahrattas. The Morés or Maurés are none other than the Mauryas; the Guptés are the Guptas; the Panwārs are the Parmars or Panwars of Rajputana; the Chalkés are the Chalukyas (Solankees) and the Jadava are the Yadavas.

The Brahmins began in time to perform the religious rites of the Mahrattas according to the Puranas and not according to the *Vedas*. P. Kamalakar wrote a book, "*Sudra Kamalakar*" prescribing religious rites for them according to Pauranic injunctions. Thus when these Rajputs of the Deccan gave up the Vedic rites, the Kshtriyas (Rajputs) of Rajputana and other provinces gave up marriage relations with them.

When Sivaji decided to perform his Coronation ceremony it became necessary to convince the Brahmins, who alone perform priestly functions, that he was a Kshtriya. Sivaji possessed ample evidence to show that he was a scion of the Sisodia family of the Rajputs, and that his ancestors, who belonged to the Royal House of Chitor, had come from Rajputana to the Deccan early in the fourteenth century A. D. The orthodox sticklers after the letter of the law amongst the Brahmins—the natural custodians of Hindu religious rites—seeing that the rites and ceremonies pertaining to the *Dvija* (twice-born) castes amongst the Hindus, were not regularly performed in the family to which Sivaji belonged, declared that he was not entitled to have his *Rajyabhishek* performed in strict Vedic religious fashion. Sivaji was made of sterner stuff, and refused to accept the decision of the Deccan Brahmins. An appeal was made to Benares, the chief seat of Hindu learning and the final court of appeal in matters of Hindu religion.

One of the most renowned Pandits of Benares, named Gaga Bhatta went to Poona and after careful investigation came to the conclusion that Sivaji was a Kshtriya, and entitled to be coronated according to

the Vedic ritual. He held, however, that as religious observances pertaining to the Kshtriya clan had been neglected in Sivaji's family for sometime past, Sivaji must first undergo certain penances enjoined by the Sastras on those, who though Kshtriyas, had neglected to perform religious rites. The penances prescribed by him were performed under his superintendence, and then the *Rajyabhishek* or coronation was celebrated in strict accordance with the traditional Vedic injunctions. All classes of Hindus, *including the whole of the Brahmin community* of the Deccan joined in this public celebration.

Some historians and students of history in recent times, have demurred to the pronouncement and decision of Gaga Bhatta though it was accepted by the entire Brahmin Community of the Deccan.

Mr. M. G. Ranade, in his brilliant little book, *Rise of the Mahratta Power*, politician and not a historian that he was, makes a rapid survey of the origin and growth of the Mahratta Power and dismisses the question of Sivaji's descent from the Sisodia Rajputs of Chitor, "raised in connection with Sivaji's coronation as a case of a more or less deliberate manipulation of facts and religious rites in aid of a foregone conclusion adopted for a purely political purpose." (p. 228).

Professor H. G. Rawlinson, in his monograph, *Sivaji the Mahratta*, (page 25) also dismisses the claim of Sivaji to be a Rajput in the same airy fashion. He says, "The family of Bhonsle claimed that the founder of their house, a certain Bhosawat Bhonsle, was a descendant of nothing less than the princely house of Chitor, whose ancestors in the troubled times of Allauddin, had migrated to the Deccan. Bhosawat Bhonsle, however, was merely a patel or village officer of the district of Saiganapur when we first hear of him, the story of his princely origin can hardly be regarded seriously." Mr. Rawlinson did not know that in

Rajputana there are thousands of Rajputs who own only a few acres of land, but claim their origin from the princely houses of Chitor, Jodhpur and Jaipur.

Mr. Kincaid and R. B. Parasnis, whose "*History of the Mahratta People*" is based on old Mahratta records accept the claim that Sivaji's father Shahji Bhonsle was descended from Rana Sajjan Singh, the grandson of Rana Lakshman Singh of Chitor, (p. 112-13).

Sir Jadunath Sarkar, in his book, *Sivaji and his Times*, holds that the genealogy of Sivaji kept in the Raigarh fort is a fabrication and disbelieves that Sivaji was a Rajput. He has, however, given no facts or arguments in support of his opinion. Mr. S. M. Edwards, the editor of Grant Duff's famous *History of the Mahrattas*, has in a footnote on page 205, while referring to the account of Sivaji's coronation given by Kincaid and Parasnis, says in the same sneering way that the statement that "the king was no doubt of Rajput origin" is quite unworthy of credence.

Leaving aside the opinion of cynical or sceptical writers whose political predilections colour their historical beliefs, or who suspect as untrue any facts of history recorded by Hindu historians, unless they are supported by Muhammadan historians, let us see what the Mahratta historians and the historians of Rajputana hold in the matter.

Messrs Kaluskar and Takakhava in their excellent *Life of Sivaji Maharaj* (pages 348-69) while giving a full account of the Coronation of Sivaji, state that the conference of the Pandits and Sastries of the Deccan held after careful investigation that Sivaji was a Kshtriya and was fully entitled to have his coronation ceremony performed in accordance with the old Vedic religious rites.

Colonel Tod, the father of Rajput history, in his wonderful work "*The Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*" (Vol. I, page 314, Oxford Edition) speak-

ing of Rana Ajaisi's (Ajaisingh) son Sajjan Singh, says that he "departed for the Deccan...............and was the ancestor of Sivaji, the founder of the Satara throne whose lineage is given in the Chronicles of Mewar."

Mehta Nainsi, in his famous *Khayat* (Chronicles) states that Sivaji was descended from the Mewar Royal family. (Vol. I., p 23, Benares edition).

The great history of Mewar by Kaviraj Shamaldas, *Vir Vinod*, written during the reign of Maharana Sajjan Singh (1874-1883), declared that Sivaji was in direct lineal descent from Rana Ajai Singh. This fact has been accepted by the Royal House of Mewar.

In Rajputana, not only is it a living tradition that Sivaji was a lineal descendant of Rana Sajjan Singh, although family relations between the Sisodias of Chitor and the Mahratta descendants of Sajjan Singh have not continued partly because the descendants of Sajjan Singh remained obscure and petty chieftains for several generations before they emerged as Rulers of States in the Deccan. As soon, however, as they achieved the status of Rulers they claimed their privileges as scions of the Ruling family of Mewar.

That Sivaji was a Sisodia Rajput is further proved by the fact that Raja Shahu of Satara, (1707-1749 A. D.) the fourth in descent from Sivaji, having no male issue, claimed the privilege of adopting a son from the parent stock of Mewar and asked Maharana Jagat Singh II (1734-53 A. D.) to give his younger brother Mathji, Bagor Nahraj, in adoption to occupy the throne of Satara. Colonel Tod says, "The Satara throne, but for the jealousies of Udaipur, might on the imbecility of Ramraja have been replenished from Mewar" (p. 314, ft. note) Also *Vir Vinod*, Vol. II, p. 1595.

In 1848 A. D. again, the last Raja of Satara, Shahu Pratap sent Shivanand Sastri to His Highness the Maharana Sarupsingh of Udaipur and begged him to give in adoption to the Satara throne, Shiverati

Maharaj Dal Singh's son Gaj Singh. The same shortsighted considerations as had influenced Maharana Jagat Singh II prevailed with Maharana Sarupsingh, and the request was turned down. (Prohit Devnath's *Short History of Mewar*, p. 174).

Recently, however, Sivaji's family has been fully recognised in a practical manner by the Mewar Durbar as an offshoot of the Royal House of Mewar. His Highness the present Maharana of Udaipur at the earnest request of Raja Sahib of Mudhol conveyed in his letter dated the 25th of April 1931 A. D., presented at the Udaipur Court by Mr. Bakshi, gave on 31st July, 1931 A. D., K. Lakshman Singh son of Daulat Singh, uncle of Maharaj Harisingh of the Netawal branch of the Bagor House, in adoption to the late Narain Rao, uncle of Raja Maloji of Mudhol. The significance of this adoption will be fully appreciated when we remember that the Bagor House has supplied four Maharanas to the throne of Udaipur, *viz* Maharana Sardar Singh in 1838 A. D., Maharana Sarup Singh in 1841 A.D , Maharana Shambhu Singh in 1861 A. D. and Maharana Sajjan Singh in 1874 A.D.

It is a notable fact that while Maharana Sangram Singh II (A.D. 1710-1734) was reigning at Udaipur, there was internal turmoil in the Satara State and big Sardars of Satara began to defy the authority of Chhatrapati Maharaja Shahu The latter appealed to the Maharana of Udaipur who sent Rawat Bagh Singh of Piplia (Mewar) to Satara. Bagh Singh brought about an amicable settlement of the dispute and restored fully the authority of Raja Shahu. Later, when the Mahratta armies began to make inroads in Mewar and the other States of Rajputana in the eighteenth century, Raja Chhatrapati Shahu, in 1726 A.D. wrote to the Mahratta generals in Rajputana forbidding them from making inroads into or harass the territory of Piplia Estate in Mewar in particular and other Sisodia Estates

in general, telling them that not only did the Rawat of Piplia and the Sisodia Rajputs belong to the same family as the Rulers of Satara, but that it was due to the services of these Mewar kings that the Hindu Raj had been preserved in India.[1]

Another independent testimony of the fact that in Rajputana, Sivaji has always been regarded as belonging to the Sisodia Rajput family is furnished by the fact that in the collection of the horoscopes of great men made about Samvat 1732-37 (1675-1680 A. D.) by Pandit Shivram, a descendant of the famous Jodhpur State astrologers, the Chandu family, the following horoscope of Maharaja Sivaji appears under the heading, "Rulers of the Rana family," along with those of Maharana Pratap, Maharana Rajsingh, Maharana Amarsingh and others:—

संवत् १६८६ फाल्गुन (चैत्र वदि ३ शाके घटी ३०।६
राजा शिवाजी जन्म । र १०।२३ लग्न ४।२६

च ६ श ७	५	४ स रा ३
८	श्री	२ र
९ के १०	रा । म ११	१ शु बु १२

A notable fact is that no Musalman historian of the Mughal times has denied that Sivaji was a Rajput by

[1] Gauri Shanker Ojha's *History of Rajputana*, Vol. II, p. 1259.

descent. Hashim Khafi Khan, the author of the celebrated Persian history, "*Muntakhab-ul-lubab*" holds that Sivaji was a descendant of the Rānās of Chitor.

Original historical research in the Deccan has during the last few years brought to light documentary evidence which places beyond all doubt the fact that the great Sivaji was descended from the Chitor family. Before, however, we discuss that evidence we would briefly state when and the circumstances in which, Ajaisingh's son, Sajjansingh, left Mewar and migrated to the Deccan.

The kings of Chitor used to be styled 'Rawal' and not 'Rana' up to the time of Ratan Singh (A.D. 1302). Rawal Ran Singh, also called Karan Singh (A. D. 1158) of Chitor had three sons, the eldest of whom, Kshemsingh, succeeded his father as ruler of Chitor (A. D. 1168) while the second son, Mahap, was given the *Jagir* of Sisoda, and ruled there as *Rana* of Sisoda. The ninth in descent from Karansingh, was Rawal Ratan Singh who ascended the throne of Chitor in A D. 1302. And the eleventh in descent from Māhāp, was Rana Lakshman Singh of Sisoda, who was the contemporary of Rawal Ratan Singh of Chitor. On 26th August, 1302 A. D., Sultan Allauddin Khilji took possession of Chitor after a six months siege. Rawal Ratan Singh of Chitor and Rana Lakshman Singh of Sisoda with his seven sons were killed in the war. The eighth son of Lakshman Singh named Ajai Singh was wounded and, at the urgent request of his father, retired to Sisoda to save his line from extinction.

Rana Ajai Singh while ruling in Sisoda was greatly troubled by the raids of Munja, a Balecha Rajput chieftain of Godwar. He asked his two sons, Sajjan Singh and Kshem Singh, to punish the Balecha. They failed to do so. He then asked his nephew, Hammir—son of Ajai Singh's elder brother Arisingh,

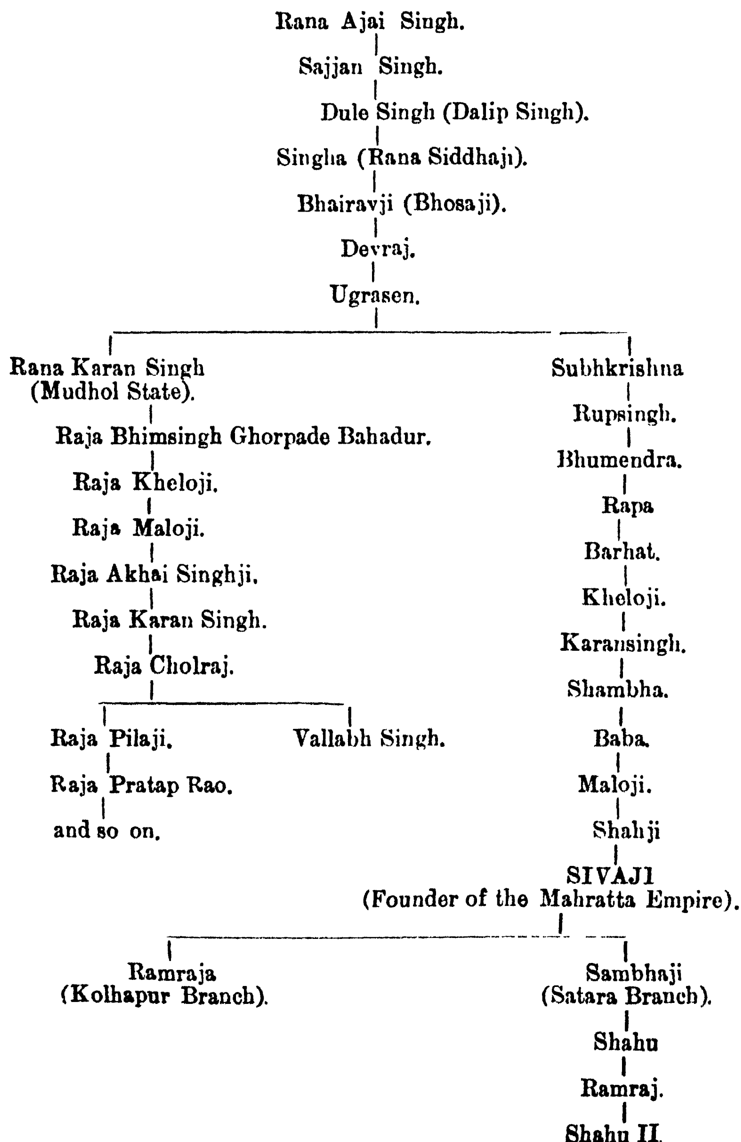
who had also died fighting at Chitor—to rid him of the Balecha. We relate the incident in the inspiring words of Colonel Tod, the author of the *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan.*

"Hammir was summoned, and accepted the feud against Munja, promising to return successful or not at all. In a few days he was seen entering the pass of Kelwara with Munja's head at his saddle-bow. Modestly placing the trophy at his uncle's feet, he exclaimed: "Recognise the head of your foe! Ajaisi kissed his beard (chin) and observed that fate had stamped empire on his forehead; impressed it with a *tika* of blood from the head of the Bālecha. This decided the fate of the sons of Ajaisi; one of whom died at Kelwara, and the other, Sajjansi, who might have excited a civil war, was sent from the country. He departed for the Deccan, where his issue was destined to avenge some of the wrongs the parent country had sustained, and eventually to overturn the monarchy of Hindustan; for Sajjansi was the ancestor of Sivaji, the founder of the Satara throne, whose lineage is given in the Chronicles of Mewar." (p. 314.)

It is thus clear that Sajjansingh migrated to the Deccan a few years after the conquest of Chitor by Sultan Allauddin Khilji in 1303 A. D., but before A. D. 1326 when Hammir reconquered Chitor.

Recent research has brought to light many royal *Farmans* and other contemporary documents which prove that Sajjansingh and his descendants won distinction by valorous deeds in the Deccan. They served the Bahmani Sultans of Gulbarga and were given *Jagirs.* They eventually became Rajas of Mudhol. From the various *Farmans* issued by the Bahmani Sultans of Gulbarga and the kings of Bijapur and preserved in the archives of the Mudhol State, and the Satara State records, a geneology of the descendants of Rana Sajjansingh has been prepared

and is given below. *Vir Vinod* (History of Mewar) Vol. II, p. 1582 also supports it.



FARMANS

The first *Farman* dated the Hijri era 753 (A. D. 1352) granted by the Bahmini Sultan Allauddin Hasan Gangoo (A. D. 1347-1358) to Rana Dalipsingh says, "Being pleased with the valient deeds displayed on the battle-field by *Rana* Dalipsingh), Sardar-i-Khaskhel, the *son of Sajjansingh and grandson of Ajaisingh*, ten villages in Mirath, Tarf Devagadh, are granted to him for the maintenance of his family. So, in accordance with his desire, they should be given over to him. Dated the 25th day of the month, Ramzan, (Hijri) year 753."

Rana Dalip's son Siddhaji popularly called Singha was the military governor of Sagar in A. D. 1393. Sultan Firozshah Roz Afzoon Bahmani (A. D. 1397-1422) received great help from Siddhaji and his son Bhairavsingh in winning the throne. The Sultan's *Farman* dated the 25th Rabi-Ul-Akhir, H. 800 (13th January 1398 A.D.) says "Rana Sidhaji, Thanedar of Sagar, on receipt of the news of our Imperial presence came to us and joined our cause............He fell and sacrificed himself in the thick of the fight......Sidhaji's son Bhairav Singh who had fought shoulder to shoulder with his father against our enemies had attracted our Imperial notice. In view of the sacrifice of life made by his father, the township of Mudhol with the adjoining 84, villages in the Raigarh Tarf have been granted............to Bhairavsingh."

Bhairavsingh was succeeded by Deoraj, who had two sons, Ugrasen and Pratapsingh. Ugrasen who succeeded Deoraj, was killed fighting for his master Sultan Ahmad Shah in the battle of Konkan. Ugrasen had two sons Karansingh and Shubhkaran or Shubhkrishna.

Farman dated 8th Shawal A. H. 827 (3rd September, A.D. 1424) granted by Sultan Ahmad Shah Bahmani (A. D. 1424-1435) to Rana Ugrasen says

that Sidhaji Rana, Thanedar of Sagar and his son Bhairav Singh who are the great grandfather and grandfather of Rana Ugrasen son of Rajsingh Deo (Deoraj Singh) stood beside us in the period of Firoz Shah Bahmani."

The *Farman* dated A.H. 858 (21 December, 1454 A.D.) granted by Sultan Allauddin Sani (II) Bahmani (A. D. 1435-1457) to the two sons of Rana Ugrasen, after saying that the *Jagir* after the demise of Deoraj was continued to his sons Ugrasen and Pratapsingh, adds that "all the possessions are to be continued to Karansingh and Shubhkrishnaji sons of Ugrasen and their uncle Pratapsingh."

The *Farman* dated the 7th Jamadiul Awwal A. H. 876 (22nd October 1471 A D.) of Sultan Muhammad Shah Bahmani II (A. D. 1463-1482), in granting territory and the title of Raja Ghorpade in place of the title 'Rana', and a standard of the colour of the Iguana to Rana Bhimsingh son of Karansingh, describes how Rana Bhimsingh, son of Karansingh and grandson cf Ugrasen made the Ghorpads (Guana) ascend the ramparts of the fort of Konkan and then with their help scaled the fortress, and that, owing to this contrivance," in place of the title *Rana*, the high title of Raja Ghorpade Bahadur was conferred on him."

Farman dated 22nd Rajab, A. H. 896 (31st May, 1491) granted by Sultan Mahmud Shah Bahmani II (A. D. 1482-1518) confirms the *Jagir* to Raja Kheloji son of Bhimsingh and grandson of Karan Singh.

During the reign of this monarch, his governors of several provinces became independant and the Bahmani Kingdom of Gulbarga broke up into five independant kingdoms:—

(1) Adil Shahi of Bijapur (2) Qutub Shahi of Golkunda (3) Imadshahi of Berar (4) Nizamshahi of Ahmadnagar and (5) Bareedshahi of Ahmedabad Bidar Yusuf Adil Shah was the first king of Bijapur and was

succeeded by his son Ismail Adil Shah in 1510 A. D. The Nizamshahi Sultan of Ahmadnagar invaded Bijapur. During this war, Kheloji fought for Sultan Ismail Ali Shah and was killed in the battle of Alappur near Bijapur. Sultan Ismail Adil Shah in his *Farman* dated A.H. 928 (19th November 1522 A. D.) praises the bravery shown by Maloji in the battle on the banks of Krishna against Timraj of Vijianagar and confers on Raja Maloji Ghorpade the privilege of using two *morchals* and exempts him from performing obeisance of a subject. The *Farman* dated A. H. 972 (28th July, 1565 A.D.) granted by Sultan Ali Adil Shah I (A. D. 1557-1580) to Raja Cholraj Ghorpade after the battle of Talkot when his father, Raja Karansingh, was killed, says that it was "issued to Cholraj son of Karansingh and grandson of Akhaisingh" and confers on Cholraj the rank of "Commander of Seven Thousand and the *Jagir* of Mudhol and tracts round about Baibag and Hukeri" etc.

Karansingh and his descendants continued to rule as Rajas of Mudhol. Shubhkaran (Shubhkrishna) son of Ugrasen separated from Karansingh. Sivaji was a descendant of Shubhkrishna. Apte's *History of the Mudhol State* gives an account of Karan Singh's descendants, Bhimsingh, Kheloji, Maloji and Akhaisingh. Akhaisingh's eldest son, Karansingh won the favour of Sultan Adilshah of Bijapur by rendering him valuable services; and his son Cholraj obtained from him, in addition to his old Jagir, the *pargannah* of Torgal and Munsab of Seven Thousand. Cholraj had three sons Pilaji, Kanoji and Vallabhsingh. Pilaji lost his life fighting valiently in the army of Sultan Ibrahim. The Sultan pleased with his bravery, bestowed on Pilaji's son Pratap Singh, a Mansub of 7000 and renewed the *Jagir* of Mudhol. Shahji (the father of Sivaji) who was descended from Shubhkrishna son of Ugrasen, claimed a share in the Mudhol State, then

ruled by Prataprao, on the plea that the State had been first granted to Bhairav Singh and then confirmed by a fresh *Farman* to Ugrasen, their common ancestor.

Shahji had been in the service of the Sultan of Ahmadnagar. Relinquishing that service, he later took service with Sultan Muhammad Adilshah of Bijapur. Shahji claimed a share in the *Jagir* of Mudhol and applied for redress to the Sultan whose favour Shahji had won by rendering important services to him. Sultan Adil Shah's *Farman* dated the 17th Rajab A. H. 1047 (25th November 1637 A. D.) says "Raja Shahji Bhonsle recently represented to the lofty court that the grandson of Cholraj. Prataprao Bahadur Ghorpade, had by force withheld his half share from ancient times, in the Mudhol Jagir, the townships of pargannah Wai and the fort therein and the possessions in Karad; also no share is given to Rao Maloji,[1] the grandson of Vallabhsingh and great grandson of Cholraj but he has given a share to Amansingh and Ambaji in the villages of Mudhol. Hence his (Shahji's) own share and that of Maloji, the grandson of Vallabhsingh, be granted by the holy Sarkar. This representation has been considered by our holy and great mind and our attention has been drawn to it; for, it is a matter of our imperial policy to see that the requirements of this honest and obedient ancient house are provided for, this has ever been our policy, in accordance with which the following agreeable *Farman* is issued. Prataprao, the grandson of Cholraj, should feel himself satisfied with Mudhol and 84 villages, the pargannah of Torgal, half the townships of Karnatic and Karad and the Mansub of Seven Thousand; Raja Shahji should receive half the pargannah of Wai, twenty-six townships of Karad and half of the Karnatic as his

[1] Prataprao's father Pilaji and Vallabhsingh were brothers and were sons of Cholraj.

portion, with the Mansub of Five Thousand; and Mahaloji, the son of Bhairav Singh, the son of Vallabhsingh has been granted thirty villages in the neighbourhood of Vijianagar, with the command of Two Thousand. Separate sanads have been issued. Hence *all the members of the family* should be satisfied with the liberal grants conferred and they should pay all attention to the welfare of the ever-increasing empire and the services pertaining to it. Dated the 17th of Rajab A. H. 1047."

The acceptance of Shahji's claim by the Sultan of Bijapur, the master or overlord of both Shahji and Prataprao, that Shahji, father of Sivaji, belonged to the same family as Mudhol sets at rest all doubts regarding the descent of Shahji. It is proved that Shahji, father of Sivaji was descended from the same ancestor as had obtained the grant of the Mudhol State and whose descendants are still Rajas of Mudhol. The *Farmans* granted to the Rulers of the Mudhol State given above, show that the rulers of that State were direct descendants of Rana Sajjan Singh, who had left Mewar to seek his fortune in the Deccan. And as Shahji was also descended from Rana Bahirav Singh who was the first to be given the fief of Mudhol, it is established beyond doubt that Shahji and his son Śivāji were direct descendants of Rana Sajjan Singh son of Rana Ajaisingh of Mewar.

An almost irrefutable proof of the fact that Śivāji was a lineal descendant of Rana Sajjan Singh who had migrated to the Deccan from Sisodā (Mewar) is the fact that Śivaji's ancestors, from Dalipsingh son of Sajjansingh to Bhimsingh all bore the title of 'Rana', which was the hereditary title of the rulers of the Sisoda branch of the Chitor family and which later became the title of the sovereigns of Mewar after the accession of the Sisodias to the throne of Chitor.

This title 'Rana' was transformed into Raja by the command of Sultan Muhammad Shah Bahmani II in 1471 A.D. It is noteworthy that history does not know of any Sardars or Chieftains amongst the indigenous Mahrattas, who ever bore the hereditary title of Rana, which is a distinctive Rajputana title. The Farmans quoted above give an unbroken chain of the descendants of Rana Sajjansingh who bore this title.

All these *Farmans* in original are in the possession of the Raja of Mudhol, and their photographic copies may be seen in Pandit Gaurishankar's collection, Ajmer.

The portraits of Sajjansingh, Dalipsingh, Karansingh, Maloji and Pratapsingh given in Apte's *History of Mudhol* show that they kept up in the Deccan the dress of the Sisodia Rajputs of Mewar, and that in that dress they can hardly be distinguished from the Mewar nobles.

EMPEROR VISALDEVA[1]

See the conquering hero comes.

NATHANIEL LEE, *Theodosius.*

"THERE is no spot in Rajputana", says Colonel Tod, "that does not contain some record of the illustrious Chauhan; and though every race has had its career of glory, the sublimity of which, the annals of the Sisodias before the reader sufficiently attest, yet with all my partiality for those with whom I long resided, and with whose history I am best acquainted, my sense of justice compels me to assign the palm of martial intrepidity to the Chauhan over all the "royal races" of India. Even the bards, to whatever family they belong, appear to articulate the very name as if imbued with some peculiar energy, and dwell on its terminating nasal with peculiar complacency. Although they had always ranked high in the list of chivalry, yet the seal of the order was stamped on all who have the name of Chauhan, since the days of Prithviraja, the model of every Rajput and who had a long line of fame to maintain. Of the many names familiar to the bard is Goga of Bhatinda who with forty-seven sons "drank of the stream of the sword" on the banks of the Sutlege, in opposing Mahmud of Ghazni."[2]

The Chauhans rose and fell before the Gehlots or the Sisodias attained to fame and before the Rathors had their birth in Rajputana. They stemmed

[1]Reprinted (and enlarged) from the *Vedic Magazine and Gurukula Samachar* of *Aswin* V. S. 1969, (October 1912 A.D.)

[2]Tod's *Rajasthan*, Vol. I, p. 549, (Cal. Ed. 1877).

the tide of Afghan aggression for a very long time until they were finally submerged in the fateful year 1192 A.D. From the seventh to the thirteenth century A. D. they adorned the annals of Rajputana with deeds of chivalry and valour, which found their highest expression in the chivalrous career of Emperor Prithviraja, which put a seal on their position at the head of Rajput hierarchy, and earned for them the undisputed title to the crown of Rajput chivalry.

Emperor Visaldeva IV, also called Vigraharaja, was the second son of Arnorāja or Anhaldeva, (also called Ānaji) king of Sapadlaksha, as the kingdom of Ajmer was then called, and came to the throne about A.D. 1152, after expelling his elder brother, the parricide Jugdeva. Both Jugdeva and Visaldeva were sons of Arnoraja by his queen Sudhava of Mārwār. By his second queen Kanchandevi, the daughter of the celebrated Sidhraj Jai Singh, king of Gujrat, Arnoraja had a third son, named Someshwara, the father of the renowned Emperor Prithviraja.

Visaldeva's reign is a landmark not only in the history of the Chauhan Rajputs but also in the history of India. He was the first Chauhān Emperor of India. He reduced to submission the various kings of Hindustan. The principalities of Pāli, Jalor and Nādole (the last, once an independent Chauhan kingdom) had during the time of Arnorāja acknowledged the suzerainty of the Gujrat king Kumarpal and transferred their allegiance to him. Visaldeva therefore attacked them. He "burnt Jalor, reduced Pali to a hamlet and Nadole to a marsh."[1] All these were once Chauhan feudatories of Ajmer, and Visaldeva once more reduced them to their original status, and

[1]See the Bijolian inscription dated the Samvat year 1226. (A. D. 1169).

compelled them to look to Ajmer rather than to Anhilwārā Pātan for protection and safety.

Visaldeva conquered Delhi from the Tanwars and made the king of Delhi a feudatory of Ajmer. He then advanced further north and then towards the East and drove the Musalmans out of Hindustan and became Emperor of India.

There is difference of opinion as regards the date of his conquest of Delhi. It has been placed by various authorities between A. D. 1139 and 1166. As a matter of fact, the event took place sometime between A. D. 1153 and 1163; for, according to an inscription[1] in the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Visaldeva was making preparations, in Ajmer to move towards Delhi and the north in A. D. 1153; and the inscription on the famous Siwalik Pillar in Delhi[2] dated the 9th April 1164 says that the Emperor had conquered the whole of Hindustan.

The Bijolian Inscription also disposes of another popular error that Prithviraja of Ajmer got Delhi by inheritance when he was adopted as son by king Anangpal of Delhi. It is now clear that it was not Prithviraja who got Delhi, as wrongly stated in the famous *Prithviraja Rasa*, but his father's elder brother, Visaldeva, who had conquered it, and who, by extending his conquests to the whole of Upper India, was the first of the Chauhan Emperors of India—the Chauhans being the last of the Kshtriya races who became Lords Paramount of India. This fact has now been proved beyond doubt by the Delhi Siwalik Pillar inscription.

The history of this pillar called the Delhi Siwalik Pillar is a chequered one. Built by Emperor

[1] For this inscription, see Dr. Kielhorn, *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. xx, p. 201.

[2] See *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. xix p. 215; and *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. viii, p. 130.

Asoka nearly three hundred years before Christ, it has seen many a dynasty come and go in India. It is a single shaft of pale pinkish sandstone, 42 ft. 7 inches in length, of which the upper portion, 35 ft. in length, has received a very high polish. Its upper diameter is 25·3 inches and its lower diameter 38·8 inches, the diminution being 3·9 inches per foot. Its weight is rather more than 27 tons.

This celebrated pillar was originally erected at a place called Topar Suk or Topur or Tobra and was situated on the bank of the Jumna in the district of Salora near Khizrabad, 180 miles from Delhi. This position at the foot of the mountains points out the present Khizrabad on the Jumna just below the spot where the river issues from the lower range of hills. Salora is perhaps Sidhora, only a few miles to the west of Khizrabad. Visaldeva, after conquering the territories from Vindhya to the Himalayas reached this place at the foot of the latter mountain, and seeing this pillar there had his inscriptions engraved on it. From this place it was removed to Delhi about A.D. 1356, by Firoz Shah Tuglak (A.D. 1357-88) The pillar was conveyed by land on a truck to Khizrabad from whence it was floated down the Jumna to Ferozabad or New Delhi and fitted on the top of the three-storied building called Firozshah's Kotilla. When it was fixed, "the top was ornamented with black and white stonework surmounted by a gilt pinnacle from which it received its name of *Minar Zarin* or Golden pillar. This gilt pinnacle was still in its place in A. D. 1611 when William Finch came to Delhi."[1]

This pillar was one of several such put up in the middle of the third century B. C. by Emperor Asoka for the promulgation of his edicts in the Pali language. The Asoka inscription on it ends with a

[1] *Cunningham's Archaeological Survey Reports*, Vol. I., p. 164.

sentence in which the Emperor directs the setting up of these monoliths in different parts of India as follows :—" Let this religious edict be engraved on stone pillars and stone tablets that it may endure for ever."

The other inscriptions on it are those of Emperor Visaldeva. They are three in number and are of great historical importance. The first is immediately above Asoka's edicts, and the other two immediately below them. The upper one is engraved in much larger characters than the lower ones.

An impression of these inscriptions was presented to the Asiatic Society of Bengal by Lt.-Col. Polier, and from it an account and partial translation of the inscriptions as explained by Radhakant Sharma were given in 1788 A.D. in the *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. I, pp. 379-382. Another impression of the inscriptions prepared under the supervision of Captain James Hoare was presented to the same society in the beginning of the 19th century. These inscriptions with an English translation by H. T. Colebrooke was published in 1801 A. D in the *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. VII, pp. 179-181. Captain Wilford referring to them in Vol. IX, pp. 188-189, pointed out that Visaldeva was mentioned also in the *Sarangadhra Paddhati* nearly in the same words with the inscriptions. On this, Colebrooke amended his reading of the text. See his *Miscellaneous Essays*, Vol. II, pp. 232-237; see also Prinsep's Essays, Vol. I, p. 325. Later, Mr. Fleet supplied correct impressions and photo-Lithographs of these inscriptions to Professor Kielhorn who has edited them in the *Indian Antiquary*.[1]

The first inscription covers a space of about 1′ 11″

[1] Professor F. Kielhorn of Gottingen in the *Indian Antiquary* for July, 1890, Page 215.

broad by from 8″ to 10″ high; and the size of the letters is between 2″ and 2½″. The second covers a space of about 3′ 10½″ broad by about 8″ high; and the size of letters is 1½″. The third covers a space of about 5′ broad by about 1′ 1″ high; and the size of the letters is about 1¾″ in the first four, and about 1½″ in the remaining two lines. Throughout, the writing is well preserved, so that the actual reading of the text of the inscription is nowhere in the least doubtful. The characters are Nagri, with nothing remarkable about them except that the sign for *bh* shows a rather peculiar form—*e.g.* in Śakambhari-bhupati, in the first inscription, line 2,—which we meet again, *e.g.*, in the 'Palam Baoli' inscription of the Vikrama year 1337. All the three inscriptions were evidently written by the same writer, the Kayastha Sripati, a son of Mahava, of Gor descent (third inscription, line 5). The language of the inscriptions is Sanskrit; the first is in prose; the second in verse; and of the third, lines 1-4 are in verse, and lines 5-6 in prose. As regards Orthography the consonant *b* is denoted by the sign for *v* in the word *vrulé* in the third inscription, line 3, the only word in which it occurs.

In the 'Pālam Baoli' inscription of the Vikrama year 1337, which has been already mentioned above, we are told that the country of Hariyanaka, to which 'Delhi' belonged, was first ruled by the Tomaras, afterwards by the Chauhans, and later by the Saka-rulers, *i.e.* the Muhammadans. And similarly, the Delhi Museum inscription of the Vikrama year 1384 relates that 'Dhillika' was founded by the Tomaras, and that it was afterwards the residence of Chahamanas, until it was conquered by the Mlechchha Sāhabadin. Our inscriptions show that the Chahamana Visaldeva-Vigraharaja, king of Sakambhari (or Sambhar), had conquered a considerable tract of country even beyond Delhi, and had apparently checked for a time the

progress of the Muhammadan invaders by whom his own descendants were defeated twenty seven years after the date of these inscriptions.

SIWALIK PILLAR INSCRIPTIONS

The first inscription simply says: "Samvat 1220, Vaisakh Sudi 15th (9 April 1164 A.D.), this monument is of the Lord of Sakambhari, Sri (illustrious), Visaldeva, the son of Sri (illustrious) Anhaldeva."

The second inscription is a eulogy of Visaldeva and says that when he goes on an expedition he resembles Vishnu.[1] It says:

"Om; tears are evident in the eyes of (thy) enemy's consort; blades of grass are perceived between thy adversary's teeth; thy fame fills with glory all space; the minds of thy foes are void (of hope); their route is the desert where men are hindered from passing, O Vigraharajdeva, when the Jubilee of thy onward march has come. May thy abode, O Vigraha, Sovereign of the Earth, be fixed, as in reason it ought, in the bosoms (akin to the mansion of dalliance) of the women with beautiful eyebrows, who were married to thy enemies. There is no doubt of thy being the highest of embodied souls. Didst thou not sleep in the lap of Sri (prosperity) whom thou didst seize from the ocean, having churned it."

The third is the most important of all and says: "In the year 1220 (9th April, 1164), on the fifteenth day of the bright half of the month of Vaisakh (this monument) of the fortunate Visaladeva, son of the fortunate Anhaldeva, king of Sakambhari. As far as the Vindhya, as far as the Himādri (Himalayas) having achieved conquest in the course of travelling to Holy places; striking at the haughty kings and gracious to those whose necks are humbled, making Aryavarta

[1] *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. viii, p. 130.

once more what its name signifies (Land of Aryas), by causing the barbarians (Mlechhas) to be exterminated; Visaldeva, supreme ruler of Sakambhari and sovereign of the Earth, is victorious in the world. This conqueror, the fortunate Vigraharaja, king of Sakambhari, most eminent of the tribe which sprang from the arms (of Brahma) now addresses his own descendants: 'by us the region of the earth between Himavat and Vindhya has been made tributary; let not your minds be void of exertion to subdue the remainder.' In the year, from Sri Vikramaditya, 1220 on Thursday the 15th day of the bright half of the month of Vaisakh. This was written by order of the king in the presence of the astronomer Sri Tilak Raja, by Sripati, the son of Mâhava, a Kayastha of the Goṛ family. At this time the fortunate Salakshana Pala, a Raja-putra is prime minister. Siva the terrible, and the universal monarch." [1]

This proud boast of Visaldeva that he had exterminated the barbarians and made Aryavarta once more what its name implies, marks the birth of the Empire which attained its zenith of glory under Emperor Prithviraja, the *beau ideal* of Rajput chivalry. His earnest appeal to his successors to drive them beyond the borders of India, though unheeded by the first three of his successors, found an echo in the thrilling heart of his nephew, the chivalrous Prithviraja, whose glorious exploits shed lasting lustre not only on Chauhan arms but on the whole Hindu race.

This expulsion of the Musalmans from Hindustan occurred when the Yaminia dynasty of the Ghazni Sultans founded by Sultan Subuktagin was still reigning. Though the Musalman historians, as is customary with them, omit defeats and skip over

[1] See Professor F. Kielhorn's translation in the *Indian Antiquary*, July, 1890 A. D, p. 215. Also, Professor Colebrooke's translation in the *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. viii, p. 130.

reverses, and do not describe this event, it is clear that the Sultan who was driven out of Hindustan by Visaldeva was either the last but one of this line, the Khusrau Shah, who ascended the throne in A D. 1150 and who, according to the *Tazkirat-ul-Maluk*, returned from the Punjab to Ghazni subsequent to the retirement of Alaud-din Hasan, son of Hasan Ghori from Ghazni after plundering it; or, his son Khusrau Malik,—the last of the descendants of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni—who had come to the Punjab in A. D. 1160, and who was eventually imprisoned and murdered by Sultan Muizzudin bin Sam, popularly known as Shahbuddin Ghori, in A. D. 1186.[1]

Visaldeva's immense army, as stated in the stone inscriptions in the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, (*Lalita Vigraharaja Natak* of the poet Someshwara), consisted of one thousand elephants, a hundred thousand cavalry, and several lakhs of infantry. His Prime Minister appears to have been one Sulakhshanapál.[2]

Visaldeva founded a number of towns in different parts of his dominions and named them all Visalpur. One of them still stands about seven miles to the south-west of Thoda, at the south-west corner of the Girwar mountain range in Mewar. Its situation is striking. It lies at the mouth of the chasm-like gorge which runs through the range to Raj Mahal. The Dai and Khari rivers here join the Banās and form a *triveni* and the united streams then run through the pass to the east of the range. The pass is very narrow at each end with high precipitous cliffs closely approaching each other from the opposite sides, but it widens out into a great mountain-girded amphitheatre in the centre, where the Banās river in the rainy season forms a great lake called Anāsagar, after Visaldeva's father Ānāji.

[1] Duff's *Chronology*, p. 165.

[2] *The Indian Antiquary*, Vol. xx, p. 201.

"At the entrance to the pass is the temple of Visaldeva undefiled by the Muslim, which contains inscriptions of Emperor Prithviraja, dated Samvat 1231 and 1244 (A. D. 1174 and 1187)."

Emperor Visaldeva was a monarch as much distinguished for letters as for valour. Like the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius or Sri Harshadeva who flourished in the sixth century A. D., his literary achievements rivalled his military glory, and show that he was as pre-eminent in arts of peace as in deeds of arms.

Visaldeva was a great poet. Fragments of his drama "*Harakeli Natak*," engraved on slabs of blackstone found buried in the courtyard of the *Adhai Din ka Jhonpra* at Ajmer in 1875 A. D., prove his scholarship.

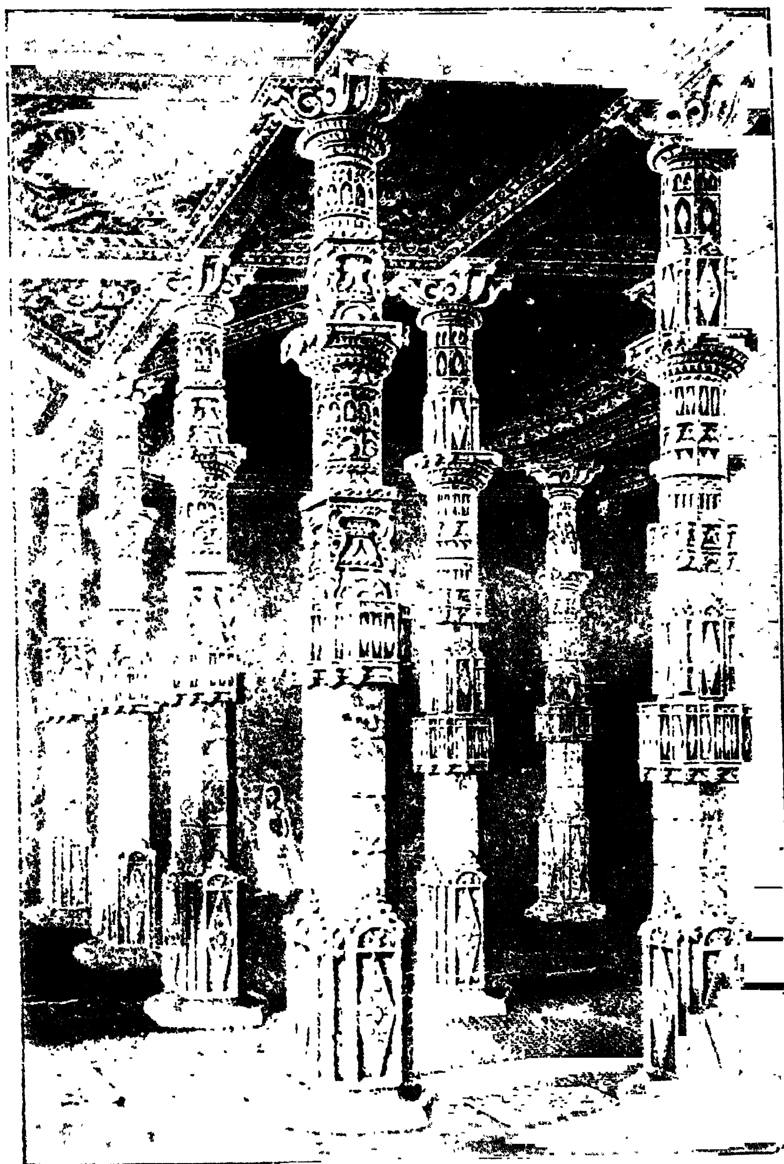
ADHAI DIN KA JHONPRA

Emperor Visaldeva-Vigraharaja has left two memorials of his memorable reign in Ajmer. The first is the College built by him which was converted into a mosque during the time of Qutbuddin Aibak and Sultan Shamsuddin Altamash and is now known as the Adhai Din Ka Jhonpra. From an antiquarian as well as an architectural point of view, the *Jhonpra* is one of the most important buildings in India. General Cunningham the first Director-General of Archæology, says:—"There is no building in India which either for historical interest or archæological importance is more worthy of preservation."[1] Colonel Tod holds it to be "one of the most perfect as well as the most ancient monuments of Hindu architecture"[2] still preserved.

In its conception and execution, this building was a fit monument of the reign of Emperor Visaldeva. As a work of art, it was an exquisite ornament of the Capital of his Empire. As a specimen of Hindu

[1] *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, Vol. i, p. 778.

[2] Cunningham's *Archaeological Survey Reports*, Vol. i, p. 156.



ADHAI-DIN-KA-JHONPRA, AJMER.

sculpture, this college building marks the high water-mark of excellence attained in the art. "For gorgeous prodigality of ornament, beautiful richness of tracery, delicate sharpness of finish, laborious accuracy of workmanship, endless variety of detail, all of which are due to the Hindu masons, this building", says General Cunningham, "may justly vie with the noblest buildings which the world has yet produced."[1]

Mr. Fergusson[2] says: "As examples of surface decoration, the Jhonpra and the mosque of Altamash at Delhi are probably unrivalled. Nothing in Cairo or in Persia is so exquisite in detail, and nothing in Spain or Syria can approach them for beauty of surface decoration."

The building was originally constructed as a College house. It was built in the form of a square 259 feet each side, with cloisters on all the four sides enclosing a spacious court-yard, and four splendid star-shaped cloister towers on the four corners, surmounted by magnificent *chhatrees*. The building stood on a high terrace, and was originally constructed against the scarped rock of the hill, having the *Saraswati Mandir* (Temple of Learning) on the western side, and entrances towards the south and east. The interior consisted of a quadrangle 200 feet by 175 feet. A comparison of this building with an almost similar one at Dhar also converted into a mosque, and which is still known as Raja Bhoja's *Pathshala* (School), would remove all lingering doubts regarding its origin. The towers, the exquisitely-designed fluting and ornamental bands of the columns, and the wonderful cloisters in the shape of a quadrangle, which originally extended to 770 feet, and of which only 164 feet are now left, were destroyed by the ignorant bigotry and fanaticism of the Afghans of Ghor, who attacked Ajmer under Shahabuddin Ghori in 1192 A. D.

[1] *Archæological Survey of India*, Vol. ii, p. 263.
[2] *History of Eastern and Indian Architecture*, p. 513.

They then began to convert it into a mosque; the alteration consisted principally of the addition of the magnificent screen-wall, consisting of seven arches[1] fronting the western side, and the insertion in the back wall, of the inevitable *mehrab* or arch inseparable from a mosque, and the erection of a pulpit or *mimbar* near it. The *imamgah* or *mehrab* in white marble was built in 1199 A. D., and the screen wall was added during the time of Sultan Shamsuddin Altamash, about 1213 A. D. The conversion was carried on under the management of different persons, the names of two of whom are recorded—Abubaker, the son of Ahmad (1200 A. D.), and Ahmad, son of Muhammad the Aariz. Thus, the work of reconstruction or conversion took more than fifteen years—from 1199 to 1213 A. D.

The Western side of the quadrangle is a vast pillared hall 248 feet long by 40 feet wide, covered by a flat recessed roof, which is divided into nine octagonal compartments corresponding with the seven arches of the screen wall and the two corners of the cloisters. In this hall there are five rows of columns, of which one row is placed against the back wall. Altogether there are 70 pillars now standing. These pillars have a greater height than those at the Kutub, and are more elegant in their sculpture and general appearance than the converted mosques in Malwa and Ahmedabad.[2]

"After confessing and admiring the taste" says Colonel Tod, "of the vandal architect, we passed under the arch to examine the more noble production of the Hindu. Its plan is simple and consonant with all the more ancient temples of the Jains. It is an extensive saloon, the ceiling supported by a quadruple range of columns, those of the centre being surmounted by

[1] The number of columns of the pillared hall ill fit in with the size of the arches, and clearly shows what is old and what is new.

[2] Captain H. H. Cole's *Preservation of National Monuments in Rajputana* (1881).

a range of vaulted coverings; while the lateral portion, which is flat, is divided into compartments. But the columns are most worthy of attention. They are unique in design, and with the exception of cave temples, probably among the oldest now existing in India. On examining them, ideas entirely novel, even in Hindu art, are developed. Like all these portions of Hindu architecture, their ornaments are very complex, and the observer will not fail to be struck with their similarity; it was evidently a rule in the art to make the ornaments of every part unlike the other, which I have seen carried to a great extent. There may be forty columns, but no two are alike. The ornaments of the base are peculiar both as to form and execution; the lozenges, with the rich tracery surmounting them, might be transferred, not inappropriately, to the Gothic Cathedrals of Europe. The projections from various parts of the shaft (which, on a small scale, may be compared to the corresponding projections of the columns in the *Duomo* at Milan), with the small niches still containing the statues, though occasionally mutilated, give them a character which strengthens the comparison, and which would be yet more apparent, if we could afford to engrave the details. The elegant *Cāmacūmpa*, the emblem of the Hindu Ceres, with its pendant palmyra branches, is here lost, as are many emblematical ornaments, curious in design and elegant in their execution. Here and there occurs a richly-carved corbeille, which still further sustains the analogy between the two systems of architecture; and the capitals are at once strong and delicate. The central vault, which is the largest, is constructed after the same fashion as that described at Nadole; but the concentric annulets, which in that are plain, in this are one blaze of ornaments, which with the whole of the ceiling is too elaborate and complicated for description."[1]

[1] *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, Vol. i, p. 780.

VISALSAR

The second memorial of Emperor Visaldeva is the lake built by him named Visalsar, and now called Vislya or Bislia. This beautiful lake was in old times, one of the two most notable and picturesque features of Ajmer. It is an artificial lake, oblong in shape.

The celebrated *Prithviraja Rasa* says that the Emperor, returning from a hunt, one day finding springs of water and hills amidst beautiful surroundings called his ministers and ordered a lake like Pushkar to be built.[1]

तब देखि नरिन्द मनुप ठाम । निर्भर गिरिन्द वन पूजासि राम
बुलाय लिये मंत्री प्रधान । सर रचो इहां पहुकर समान

And Visalsar was constructed accordingly. It received the overflow from the Anāsagar, which had been built by Visaldeva's father, Ānāji or Arnoraja (1135-1150 A.D) as well as water flowing down the western and northern slopes of Taragarh and the adjacent hills this side of Lakshmi Pol, through the Inderkot. It is about 2½ miles in circumference. The surrounding embankment was faced in stone, with steps leading to the bottom of the lake. Temples and bouses stood all round, and there were two islands in the lake in which stood palaces for the king.

Though the embankment remains all round in a more or less ruined state, as also the massive stairs on the eastern side a short distance from the water weir, nothing is left of the temples and buildings to mark the ancient grandeur of the place.[2] Images were extant on the embankment during the time of the Mahrattas (1790-1818 A.D.), which sent forth jets when the water rose to their lips.

[1] *Prithviraja Rasa*, Adiparva, Chhand 364.

[2] "The vestiges of an island are yet seen in the lake, and upon its margin; but the materials have been carried away by the Goths,"— Tod's *Rajasthan*, Vol. I, p. 783.

The islands are hopelessly ruined, though marks of a reservoir and foundations of buildings remind the spectator that in ancient times the Visalsar was a beautiful lake with island palaces fit to adorn the capital of an Emperor distinguished as much for letters as for valour. Up to the time of Jahangir the place had some pretensions to beauty, as the Emperor in his memoirs (*Tuzaké Jahangiri*) says that while at Ajmer in 1615 A.D., he ordered repairs to be executed to the lake.

The English church now stands on the south-west embankment of the lake, where once stood the temples of the sun-god. In the north-east corner of the lake, on the embankment, is an enclosure containing *Chhatrees* and *Chabutras* built over the remains of the ancestors of the *Oswal* Seths called the *Dādā bāri* (ancestors' enclosure).

INSCRIPTIONS

Ten inscriptions of the time of Visaldeva have so far been found, three on the Siwalik Pillar at Delhi of the year A.D. 1164; one, on a pillar in the Bhuteshwar temple in Lohari village in Mewar dated the Samvat year 1211 (A.D. 1154) stating that Vishneshwara Pragya Acharya of the Shaiva religion bestowed a golden dome to the Siddeshwara temple, and six in the *Adhai Din ka Jhonpra*, Ajmer.

Of these six inscriptions, two are very small ones and are engraved on the lintels of the two small staircases by the back wall of the cloistered hall, leading from the roof of the hall to the top of the Imamgah Mehrab of white marble. The one in the northern stair-case is fading fast, while the other one is in good condition, and is श्री विग्रहराज देवेन कारितमायतनमिदं, which means: "This building was constructed by the illustrious King Vigraharajadeva." The other one simply says, "Made by the illustrious King Vigraharaja."

The remaining four, recovered in 1875-76 A.D., consist of six tablets of polished basalt, inscribed in Devanagri of the twelfth century A.D., and are more or less in fragments. Four of these tablets contain fragment of two old plays in Sanskrit and Prakrita, hitherto unknown. On slabs one and two are engraved parts of the play called the *Lalita Vigraharāja Nātaka*, "The Lovely Play of Vigraharaja," composed by the learned poet Somadeva, in honour of the Emperor Vigraharaja of Ajmer. Slabs three and four contain portions of a play by Emperor Vigraharaja himself in honour of Siva, called *Harakeli Nātaka*, or the play of Hara (Siva). The play is partly in imitation of Bharavi's *Kirātārjunīya*. It also contains the praise of the Emperor by Siva for the play. The date of the play as given in the inscription, corresponds to Sunday, the 22nd November, 1153 A.D.

These inscriptions were engraved by Bhaskar, son of Mahipati and grandson of Govinda (a favourite of King Bhoj), belonging to a family of Hun chiefs.

The fifth inscription is engraved on a slab and is the beginning of a poem, the name of which is not given. It contains the *Stuti*, invocation to and praises of various *devtas* (gods), and finally comes to Surya, from whom, says the poem, the Chauhans are descended. The remaining portions appear to have been engraved on other stones, which undoubtedly still lie buried in the debris of the *Jhonpra*. This inscription is in pure Sanskrit language.

The sixth inscription was evidently a *Praśasti*, concerning the Chauhan Kings of Ajmer. Only a few pieces of one of the slabs of the Prasasti have been found. This inscription mentions that "Ajmer was made for his residence by King Ajaideva," that he conquered Narvarma (King of Malwa) on the border of Avanti (Ujjain), and that after giving his throne to his son, he became a *Vānaprasti* and took

up his abode in the forest of the sacred Pushkar. It is further stated that his son adorned the land of Ajmer with the blood of Turushkas, as a woman whose husband returns alive and victorious from war adorns herself in clothes of red *Kusunbh* colour. It is also stated that the warriors of this king captured the elephants of the king of Malwa. The name Kumar Pal is also found engraved on one of the pieces, but for want of the next connected piece nothing further can be made out of this name.

Dr. Kielhorn has edited the two inscriptions engraved on the first four of the slabs mentioned above, in the *Indian Antiquary*, Vol XX, p. 201-212. The first inscription engraved on slabs one and two, contains a portion of *Lalita Vigraharāja Nātaka*. He says: "The first slab contains thirtyseven lines of writing which cover a space of about 3′5″ broad by 1′11″ high. The writing of lines 1-18 and 21-32 apparently is in a state of perfect preservation, though in the rubbing the first line is very indistinct. At the commencement of lines 33-36 some *aksharas* are mising, owing to the lower proper right corner of the stone having broken away. The lines 1 to 36 cover the whole breadth of the inscribed surface; the line 37 measures only 9½″ in length, and is placed below the centre of the preceding line. The size of the letters is about $\frac{7}{16}$″. The characters are Nagari of the twelfth century A.D. They were well and regularly written and carefully engraved by learned Bhaskara, the son of Mahipala. The languages employed in the inscription are Sanskrit and several Prakrita dialects.

The inscription contains the end of the third act and a large portion of the fourth act of the *Lalita-Vigraharaja Nataka*. It opens with a conversation between Sasiprabha and the king (Vigraharaja), from which we may conclude that the king was in love with a daughter of a prince Vasantapala. The two lovers,

one of whom apparently has seen the other in a dream, being separated, Sasiprabha, a confidant of the lady, is sent to ascertain the king's feelings; and, having attained her purpose, she is about to depart to gladden her friend with her tidings, when the king confesses that he cannot bear to part with Sasiprabha, and proposes to send Kalyanavati to the princess instead. Accordingly Kalyanavati is despatched with a love-message, in which the king informs the lady that his march against the king of the Turushkas, a battle with whom appears to be impending, will soon give him an opportunity of joining her. Suitable preparations having been made for making Sasiprabha's stay with the king comfortable, the latter goes to attend to his mid-day ceremonies. Thus ends the third act.

At the opening of the fourth act, two Turushka prisoners appear on the scene, which represents the camp of the King (Vigraharaja) of Sakambhari or a place close to it, in search of the royal residence. In their perplexity they luckily meet with a countryman, a spy, sent to the camp by the Turushka king. This man tells them how he has managed to enter the enemy's camp, in the guise of a beggar, together with a crowd of people who went to see the god Somesvara. He also informs them that the army of the Chahamana (Vigraharaja) consists of thousand elephants, a hundred thousand horses, and a million of men; in fact, that by the side of it the ocean would appear dry. And having pointed out the king's residence, he departs. The two prisoners take their places near the royal quarters; they meet with the king, who is thinking of his beloved, address him (in verses which unfortunately are greatly damaged in the text), and are sent away richly rewarded.

Vigraharaja now expresses his surprise that his own spy, whom he has sent to the camp of the

Hammira, has not returned yet. But just then the spy comes back and informs his master of what he has been able to learn regarding the enemy's forces and his movements. According to his account, the Hammira's army consists of countless elephants, chariots, horses and men and his camp is well guarded. On the previous day it was three *Yojanas* distant from Vavveraa, the place where Vigraharaja then is, but it is now located at a distance of only one *Yojana*. There is also a rumour that the Hammira, having prepared his forces for battle, is about to send a messenger to the king.

The spy having been dismissed, Vigraharaja sends for his maternal uncle, the Raja Simhabala, and, having explained the state of affairs, consults with him and his chief minister Sridhara as to what should be done. The cautious minister advises not to risk a battle with the powerful adversary. But the king, intimating that it is his duty to protect his friends, is too proud to enter upon peaceful negotiations, and is encouraged by Simhabala to act according to his own views. While they are still consulting, the arrival of the Hammira's messenger is announced. The stranger is admitted into the royal presence, expresses his wonder at the splendour and the signs of power which surround the king, is struck with Vigraharaja's own appearance, and cannot conceal from himself that the task entrusted to him will be a difficult one to perform.

Here the inscription on the first slab ends. It may be assumed that Vigraharaja and the Hammira on the present occasion did not fight, and that the king eventually was united with his lady-love.

The second slab contains 38 lines of writing which cover a space of about 3′ broad by 1′ 10″ high, and contains a large portion of the first act and the beginning of the second act of the play. The writing appears to be well preserved, but the stone has several cracks by

which some *aksharas* may have been damaged or lost.

And from the commencement of the second act it appears that the name of Vasantapala's daughter, with whom Vigraharajadeva is represented to be in love, was Desaladevi; and from line twenty, that this princess resided in the north, near or at the town of Indrapura(?)

The second inscription also consists of two slabs, slabs no. three and four. The third slab contains the concluding portion of the fifth act, called Kraunchavijaya, of the *Harakeli-nātaka* which in line 40, as well as in lines 32 and 35, is distinctly called the composition of the poet, the *Mahārājādhirāja* and *Paramesvara*, the illustrious Vigraharajadeva of Sakambhari (line 37). It opens with a conversation, held by Siva, his wife Gauri, the Vidushaka, and a Pratihāra, in which, so far as the fragmentary state of the inscription permits one to see, the worship rendered to Siva by Ravana is spoken of with approval. Siva and his attendants then, for reasons which are not apparent turn into Sabaras or mountaineers. Noticing some fragrant smell, as of some oblation presented to him, the god despatches his attendant Muka to ascertain the cause of it. Muka returns and reports that Arjuna is preparing a sacrifice. He is told to assume the form of a Kirata, to go near Arjuna, and there to await Siva. As soon as he has left, Siva perceives that Muka and Arjuna, who were enemies before, begin fighting with one another. He therefore goes himself, as a Kirata, to assist his attendant; and behind the scene a terrible battle ensues between the god and Arjuna the progress of which is related to Gauri by the Pratihāra and which ends with the god's acknowledging the valour of his opponent, and bringing him on to the stage.—It is hardly necessary to say that the poet here has imitated the *Kirātārjunīya* of Bhāravi.

The two deities, Siva and Gauri, reveal to Arjuna their real nature; and Arjuna asks their

forgiveness for whatever he may have done to offend them, and praises Siva as the most supreme divine being. Siva, pleased with Arjuna's valour and piety, presents him with a mystical weapon and dismisses him. After Arjuna's departure, Siva tells Gauri that the poet Vigraharaja has so delighted him with his *Harakeli-nātaka* that they must see him too. Vigraharaja then himself enters, and after a short conversation, in which he pleads in favour of his *Harakeli*; and the god assures him of the pleasure which that play has afforded to him, and tells him that his fame as a poet is to last for ever, he is sent home to rule his kingdom of Sakambhari, while the god with his attendants is proceeding to Kailaśa.

The fourth slab contains 41 lines of writing which cover a space of about 3′1½″ broad by 2′ 2″ high and contain portions of the second and third acts of the play. Of this inscription too the writing appears on the whole to be well preserved.

Dr. Kielhorn says (*Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XX, p. 203) : "The metres of the twenty eight verses which my extracts contain are Sardulavikridita (in ten verses), Vasantatilaka (in seven verses), Sikharini (in four verses), Sragdhara (twice), and Anushtubh, Arya, Pushpitagara, Harini, and Mandakranta (once each). None of these verses occurs in either Sarngadhara's *Paddhati* or Vallabhadeva's *Subhashitavali*, and Professor Pischel, informs me that none is quoted in any of the work on Alamkara, accessible to him".

Dr. Kielhorn Says: "The Prakrita dialects employed in the first inscription are besides the ordinary Sauraseni, Maharashtri, in the two Arya verses recited by the lady Śaśiprabha, in lines 2 and 3, and Magadhi, spoken by the two Turushka prisoners and the Turushka spy, in lines 13-18. According to Professor Pischel, to whom I have submitted the Prakrita passages with my Sanskrit translations and

to whom I am indebted for several suggestions, the Prakrit furnished by this inscription is highly intresting, because it agrees more closely with the rules laid down by Hemachandra, than is the case with the Prakrita of any of the known plays.

These inscriptions serve a threefold purpose. Firstly, they show that Vigraharaja (Visaldeva) fought against the invaders of India from the north-west, and thus supports the Delhi Siwalik Pillar inscription of the same monarch, and tends to show that the event took place about 1153 A.D. or soon after it. Secondly, they show that Visaldeva was not only a great king but was a great scholar and poet, and was a patron of learning. "Actual and undoubted proof is here afforded," says Dr. Kielhorn, "to us of the fact that powerful Hindu rulers of the past were eager to compete with Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti for poetical fame."[1]

Thirdly, the inscriptions help us in fixing the date of the building, which would be sometime before 1153 A.D.; and if we remember the design of, and similar inscriptions in the famous Pathshala of King Bhoj, which was evidently the prototype of the *Adhai-din-ka-Jhonpra*, also in showing that the building was originally a college building.

[1]Dr. Kielhorn adds: "And it shows the strange vicissitudes of fortune that the stones on which a royal author, who could boast of having repeatedly exterminated the barbarians (Turushkas, Musalmans) and conquered all the land between the Vindhya and the Himalaya, made known to his people the products of his Muse, should have been used as common building material" by the descendants of those barbarians. —*Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XX., p. 201.

RANA HAMMIR[1]

Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!

SCOTT, *Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

THE Afghans were in possession of Chitor. "This repository of all that was precious, yet untouched, of the arts of India, was stormed, sacked and treated with remorseless barbarity[2] by Alla-ud-din, the Khilji Sultan of Delhi. This was the first occasion that this far-famed fortress passed out of the hands of the "Children of the Sun." The 11th of Muharrum A.H. 703 (25th August, 1303 A. D.)[3] was the day of the first *Saca* of Chitor. Rana Ratan Singh, before meeting his glorious death while defending the ancient heritage of his forefathers, had laid on the survivors, the sacred duty of recovering Chitor and not resting till it was in the possession of its rightful sovereigns. No lineal descendant of Ratan Singh surviving his death, Lakshman Singh the head of the Rānā branch of the Gehlots succeeded him. But he also with his eldest son, Ari Singh, died bravely defending the Capital of his race. His younger son, Ajai Singh, was severely wounded and was carried away to the hills of Kailwara, where the Jati of Sānderāo treated his wounds[4] and saved his life.

[1]Reprinted from *The Hindustan Review* for April, 1917.
[2]Tod's *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, p, 262. (First Edition).
[3]Duff's *Chronology*, p. 211.
[4]Kaviraj Shyamaldas' *Vir Vinod*, p. 289.

The descendants of the Jati have ever since been treated with distinction and respect by the Māhárānas of Chitor. Ajai Singh thus became the Rānā of Mewar, but he was Rānā only in name; for, the whole of the country except small portions of it situated near the hills of Kailwara had passed out of his hands. Kailwara is at the highest part of one of the most extensive valleys of the Aravalli, termed the Sher Nallo, the richest district of this *Alpine* region. Surrounded by his faithful adherents, Ajai Singh cherished for future occasion the wrecks of Mewar. Nay, he issued from the hills with his followers, ravaged the country near Chitor, delivered attacks on the fortress whenever occasions offered themselves and made the lives of the Sultan's officers in the fortress, unused to this guerrilla warfare, a burden to them.

Sultan Alla-ud-din Khilji had on the reduction of Chitor conferred it on his eldest son, Prince Khizr Khan, whom he publicly proclaimed his successor to the throne. The Sultan, however, soon found that he could not long keep Chitor; and seeing that it could only be kept by a Rajput chieftain, ordered Khizr Khan to evacuate it, and entrusted it to the care of Sonigraha Maldeva[1] brother of the famous Chauhan king, Rao Kānhardeva of Jalor.

Ajai Singh had two sons, Sajjan Singh and Kshem Singh. While Ajai Singh was devising means to recover his patrimony, the well-known Munja Balecha a chieftain of Godwar began to plunder the small tract of Mewar that had remained with the Maharana. The Maharana was ill: he ordered his two sons to punish the Balecha, but they could do nothing and the Balecha continued his depredations. The Rana was confined to his bed and was very sore at the incapacity of his sons. His anxieties helped his illness and he became weaker and weaker when one day a follower of Ari Singh reminded

[1] *Ferishta*, Vol. I, p. 363. Duff's *Chronology*, p. 211.

the Rana of Ari Singh's young son, who was living in the village of Unwa) saying that, that valiant son of a valiant father would probably minister to the aching heart of the chief. Hammir was the son, destined to redeem the promise of the genius of Chitor and the lost honours of his race. His birth and early history fill many a page of the history of Mewar. Ajai Singh summoned Hammir, who answered the call and presented himself before the Rana. The Rana was greatly gratified at seeing in Hammir, though a boy of 13 or 14, a young man of great physical strength and high courage whose dignified bearing gave promise of a spirit that could deal successfully with the foes that had surrounded Mewar. He was ordered to punish Munja. Hammir accepted the commission. Promising to give Munja his deserts, he departed with the faithful adherents of the Maharana. "Hearing that Munja was present in the Semari village of Godwar in an assembly of his caste, Hammir lost no time in attacking him there. In a few days, Hammir was seen entering the Kailwara pass with Munja's head at his saddle bow. Modestly placing the trophy at his uncle's feet, he exclaimed "Recognize the head of your foe!" Ajaisi, overjoyed, kissed the future hero. Remembering the last behest of his father, Rana Lakshman Singh, that when he attained "one hundred years," (figuratively death) the son of his elder brother Ari Singh should succeed him, and clearly observing that Hammir alone possessed the qualities requisite for the redemption of the land of his fathers, the Rana handed his own sword to him and drew the *raj tilak* on Hammir's forehead with the blood from the head of Munja, saying that he alone was fit to wrest Chitor back from its foes.

Sajjan Singh and Kshem Singh, sons of Ajai Singh, who were thus superseded left Kailwara and migrated towards the Deccan, where there descendants founded the kingdoms of Satara, Kolhapur, Sawantbadi, Tanjore

and Nagpur, and "avenged some of the wrongs the parent country had sustained, and eventually overturned the monarchy of Hindustan; for Sajansi (Sajjan Singh,) was the ancestor of Sivaji, the founder of the Satara throne."

Such was the advent of Hammir in the public arena of Mewar. He had inherited from his father the love of independence and the reckless bravery of the Gehlot, and from his mother, the chivalry, the high spirit and the fearlessness of a Chauhan. His mother was a woman of remarkable character and courage and was married to the heir-apparent of Rana Lakshman Singh under circumstances that call to mind the marriage, in later times, of the mother of the renowned Rathor leader Durgadas, son of Askaran.

Ari Singh, the eldest son of Rana Lakshman Singh, was on a hunting expedition towards the western hills in the Kailwara district with some young chiefs of the court, and in the hunt, wounded a wild boar which had entered for refuge a field of maize. Ari Singh came in pursuit and, with his horse, was about to plunge into the field, when a young girl, who was looking after the field on behalf of her father, asked him not to spoil the cultivation, herself offering to drive out the game. Pulling a stout stalk of maize, which grew to the height of ten or twelve feet, she pointed it and mounting the platform made to watch the corn, impaled the hog and dragged him before the hunters and departed.

Though accustomed to feats of strength and heroism from the nervous arms of their countrywomen, the act surprised them. They descended to the stream at hand under the shade of an ample mango tree and prepared the repast, as is usual, on the spot. The feast was held and comments were passing on the fair arm which transfixed the boar, when a ball of clay from a sling fractured a limb of the prince's steed. Looking in the

direction whence it came, they observed the same damsel, from her elevated stand preserving her field from aerial depradators : but seeing the mischief she had occasioned, she descended to express her regret and then returned to her pursuit. As they were proceeding homewards, after the sport of the day, they again encountered the damsel, with a vessel of milk on her head and leading in either hand a young buffalo. It was proposed in frolic to overturn her milk, and one of the companions of the prince dashed rudely by her; but, without being disconcerted, she entangled one of her charges with the horse's limb and brought the rider to the ground. On enquiry, the prince learnt that she was the daughter of a poor Rajput of the Chandano tribe. He returned the next day to the same quarter and sent for her father, who came and took his seat with perfect independence close to the prince, to the merriment of his companions, which was checked by Ari Singh asking his daughter to wife. They were yet more surprised by the demand being refused. The Rajput, on going home told the more prudent mother, who made him recall the refusal and seek the prince. They were married and Hammir was the son of the Chandano Rajputni."

When the Maharana (Lakshman Singh) and Ari Singh were killed in battle, the Chandano Rani began to pass her days with her little son like humble village people for fear of revealing Hammir's royal birth, until at the age of thirteen, he was suddenly called upon to leave his village and take up the burden of a kingdom—a kingdom to be won back—on his shoulders.

The day on which he assumed the ensigns of *rule*, he gave in the Tika dower the earnest of his future energy. He signalized the occasion by a rapid inroad into the heart of the country of the Bālecha and captured his stronghold, Passalio.

Rana Ajai Singh was soon assured that the fortunes

of Mewar were in worthy hands and the anxiety for the future of his country that was keeping his soul a prisoner in the emaciated and worn-out frame, disappeared. In a few days, Ajāisi went to the abode of Indra and the son of Ari Singh unsheathed the sword, thence never a stranger to his hand.

Unable by force of arms to expel the invaders from Mewār owing to their superiority in numbers and resources, Hammir made the whole country desolate and useless to them. Hammir made Kailwara his headquarters and constructed a lake there still called after him the Hammir *talao*. Mewar being thus deserted, the people also migrated to the territory round Kailwara. Kailwara can be reached after passing over several ranges and intricate defiles. Just behind it is a pass which leads to a most difficult and inaccessible retreat where Maharana Kumbha, the grandson of Maharana Lakha, who was Hammir's grandson later built in the fifteenth century the farfamed fortress of Kumbhalgarh. The tract of Kailwara is well watered and has abundance of pastures and excellent fruits and roots. It is three thousand feet above sea level and is about 50 miles in breadth. Supplies can be obtained from Gujrat and Marwar and the Bhils through the passes in the Western declivity. The Bhils have ever been the friends and allies of the Rulers of Mewar, and guarded the safety of their families while they fought the enemy in the plains. They furnished a contingent of five thousand bowmen whenever required. Hammir devastated the plains and left to his enemies only the fortified towns in which alone they could live with any safety. He commanded all who loved Mewar to retire with their families to hills on pain of sharing the fate of the public enemy. He closed all mountain passes, made all roads impassible and turned the country into a veritable desert. Thus though the Sultan of Delhi had given the whole of Mewar as *Jagir* to Maldeva

Padhihār, yet all that remained to the Padhihar was the citadel of Chitor with his own and the Musalman garrison in it. The entire resources of the country having been laid waste by the ever vigilant arm of the Maharana, and the land being a constant prey to his parties who issued from the hill fastnesses carrying destruction with them, Maldeva, unable to carry on the administration of the country with the resources of the fortress, left Chitor in the charge of his officers and took up his residence at Jalor, his ancestral abode.

Hammir attacked Chitor several times, but with all his brave efforts, failed to take it. The destructive policy adopted by Hammir was not without its effect on his own army. His resources also dwindled and many of his followers, unable to maintain themselves, left him. Hammir, wishing to give rest to his supporters, and collect sinews of war ceased his attacks, and later started with a handful of his faithful Rajputs, on a pilgrimage to Dwārka. Reaching the borders of Gujrat, he encamped at the village Khod, which belonged to the *Charans*. Hearing that in that village there resided a *Charan* lady by name Barudi, who could read the future and who was regarded by the whole village as an incarnation of Devi, the Rana went to visit her. Barudi, seeing the Maharana anxious and distressed, advised him to return to Mewar, saying "O hero, go back to Kailwara: you will get back Chitor. Refuse not the offer of betrothal you will get, for, it will be the means of your getting back your country." The Rana said: "Bai (sister) how can we take Chitor, we, who have no horses to mount, no soldiers to fight with, and no money to provide food for us." Barudi said: "Hero, my son, Baru, will come with a caravan of horses to Kailwara: take the horses from him, think not of paying their price—that you may do when you have money."

The prophetic words of the Charan lady made a

deep impression on the Maharana who immediately returned to Kailwara. The Barudi ordered his son to take a caravan of five hundred horses to Hammir at Kailwara, Baru was a rich dealer in horses and had a large number of them in his stables. He purchased some more and making up the number came to Kailwara. Hammir was waiting for the caravan and at once took the horses and treated Baru with respect, and gave him the confidential post of "Keeper of the gate." He made him his *Bārhet* and bestowed on him the village of Antri with several other villages, which are still enjoyed by his descendants.[1]

In the meantime the ministers of Rao Maldeva submitted to him that his daughter had grown up and if they were permitted to do so, they would take leave to suggest to him the adoption of a policy which would be very useful. The Rao permitted them to speak freely. They said that though the Sultan of Delhi had given him the whole of Mewar, it was a country only in name; for so long as Hammir Singh and his descendants lived, the land would yield to him not a shell. To keep Chitor under these conditions was to keep up unremunerative expenditure, without earning any credit for bravery. Their advice was that the Rao's daughter be married to Hammir, and the western part of Mewar which was hilly, barren, unproductive and difficult of access be given to him in dower for his maintenance and the rest of the country which was rich and fertile be kept to yield good profit. The Rao approved of this counsel and sent Mehta Juhad and Purohit Jaipal with Tika and large presents to Kailwara. These men went to the Aravalli Hills and delivered the Rao's message to the Maharana, submitting with great respect that his father and grandfather had been killed by the Muslims, not by Maldeva;

[1] Kaviraj Shyamaldas' *Vir Vinod*, p. 294.

that no doubt his country was in the Rao's possession, but he was willing to give his daughter and some land to him and that he should accept the offer. Hammir's advisers regarded this as a snare to entrap him. Hammir, however, scouted every danger which gave a chance to recover Chitor. He cooly remarked on dangers pointed out.—"*My feet shall atleast tread in the rocky steps in which my ancestors have moved.* A Rajput should always be prepared for reverses; one day to abandon his abode covered with wounds, and the next to re-ascend with *Mor* (Crown) on his head." And, remembering the prophesy of Barudi he accepted the coconut. The Purohit and the Mehta requested the Rana to go with them to Jalor and celebrate the nuptials. The Rana mounted his followers on the horses of Baru *Barhet* and left for Jalor. The marriage was celebrated with the usual ceremonies; and Maldeva gave the Maharana the following eight pargannas in dower :—Magra, Shernallah, Girwa, Godwar, Barath, Shyalpatti, Merwara and the Ghatta District. When the Rana returned to his residence with the bride, the Maharani Songiri who was a very sensible and wise lady declared to the Rana that her future was thenceforth bound up with him, not with her father, and that she would advise the Rana if he still desired to take Chitor to ask for the services of his minister Mehta Moji Ram, who was a very honest and wise man. Acting on her advice, the next morning, Maharana Hammir broached the subject to Maldeva saying that he had given him a large tract of country in dower, larger than he (Rana) ever expected, but that in his adverse circumstances he had not got a capable officer who could properly carry on the administration of the country. The Maharana added that he would be obliged if the Rao could give him Mehta Moji Ram. Maldeva was glad to hear this and liked the affectionate tone of the

Maharana. Thinking that if one of his own men was at the head of Rana's affairs, the chances of friction between them would be minimized, he sent for Moji Ram and entrusting him to the Maharana told the Mehta that till that day he had been his (Rao's) servant, but that from that day he would be the Maharana's servant and that he should thenceforth consider his profit in the Rana's profit and his loss in the Maharana's loss. The Rao took the Mehta's hands and placing them in the Rana's said "from this day forth he is your servant." The Rana returned with Moji Ram to his camp. As soon as they arrived, Moji Ram said; "if you wish to accomplish the purpose for which you have asked me of the Rao, this is the time." The Rana assured him that he had his complete confidence and that the Rana was willing to do whatever he advised him to do. On hearing this, Moji Ram said that he had received *Khabbar* of a lion at a certain place and that they should immediately start. The Maharana with his Rajputs took to their horses and started ostensibly on a hunting expedition. The next day at midnight, they arrived at the gates of the fortress of Chitor. Moji Ram advanced and calling out the gatekeepers said: "I am Moji Ram, open the gates." As Moji Ram used often to go into the fort to disburse the pay of the garrison, the gatekeepers recognising his voice opened the gates. The Rana and his Rajputs rushed into the fortress as soon as the gates opened, slew those who showed opposition and turning out the others, he raised his standard on the fort. The Muhammadan officers were tied hand and foot and thrown over the walls of the fortress. The *Pachranga* once more flew over the ramparts of Chitor. At Jalor, Rao Maldeva awaited the return of the Rana from hunting; but when twenty-four hours passed his suspicions were aroused, which were

deepened when he heard that the Maharana had gone towards Chitor. He started for Chitor with his army and his five sons Jaisa. Kirtipal, Banbir, Randhir and Kailan. The Rajputs flocked to Chitor on hearing that it was again in the Rana's possession. They received Maldeva with musket balls. Maldeva was defeated and returned to Jalor. After making suitable preparations he twice invaded Chitor, but was each time defeated.

"The standard of the Sun once more shone refulgent from the walls of Chitor, and was the signal for return to their ancient abodes from their hills and hiding places to the adherents of Hammir. The valleys of Kumbhalmer and the western highlands poured forth their streams of men, while every chief of true Hindu blood rejoiced at the prospect of throwing off the barbarian yoke." Finding that he himself could not cope with the Maharana, Maldeva carried his complaint to Delhi where Muhammad Tughlak was on the throne The king listened to him and determined to recover the lost provinces. He left Delhi with a large army to conquer Chitor. He, however, unwisely took the eastern route to Mewar where numbers were rendered useless by the intricacies of the country. The king encamped at Singholi on the central of the three steppes which mark the physiognomy of the eastern plateau of Mewar. So powerful was the feeling in Rajputana in favour of the valiant Maharana, and with such activity and skill did Hammir follow up this favour of fortune that he advanced quite confident of success against the Sultan. The Maharana attacked the Sultan who was defeated and made prisoner. His army was annihilated and he suffered a confinement of three months in Chitor.[1] He purchased his

[1] Tod's *Rajasthan*, Vol. I, p. 272.

freedom by surrendering Ajmer, Ranthambhor, Nagor and Sawai Sheopur besides paying fifty lakhs of rupees and one hundred elephants. Hammir would exact no promise of cessation from further inroads, but contented himself with assuring the king that from such he should be prepared to defend Chitor, not within, but without the walls.

Maldeva's grandson Hari Singh (Haridas) was killed by the Maharana himself in this battle, but Banbir, Maldeva's son offered henceforth to serve the Rana who assigned the districts of Neemuch, Ratanpur and Kairar to maintain the family of his wife in becoming dignity: while giving the grant, he remarked: "Prosper, render service and be faithful. You were once the servant of a Turk, but now of a Hindu of your own faith; for I have but taken back my own—the rock moistened by the blood of my ancestors, the gift of the deity I adore, and who will maintain me in it." Banbir proved worthy of the Maharana's confidence and in a few days, carried Bhainsror by assault, thus adding again to Mewar this ancient possession guarding the Chambal. The chiefs of Rajputana rejoiced once more to see a Hindu take the lead, paid willing homage and aided him with service, when required.

The Rana had not forgotten the prophetic Barudi of Khod. As soon as he was firmly established at Chitor, he invited her there and kept her in the fortress shewing her great respect and consideration. On her death, the Rana built in her memory a temple, which stands to this day and is known as the Anna Poorna temple.[1] Rao Maldeva died soon after this, and the Maharana on receiving a request from Maldeva's queen and his own queen Songiri, sent for the latter to Chitor. She brought with her, sent

[1] Kaviraj Shyamaldas *Vir Vinod*, p. 298

by her mother, three things which were regarded as magical by the people, having been given to Maldeva by the deaf yogini—a skull, a garland (डमरे) and a sword, which latter is still annually worshipped at Udaipur with great ceremony, during the Aswin *Navratri* festival.

Hammir furnished Devi Singh, a Hara (Chauhan) Sardar of his, who lived in Bhainsror (Mewar) with sufficient force to attack the Mina Chief of Bundi and wrest that kingdom from the Minas. Mehta Nainsi says in his *Chronicles* that Ari Singh, father of Rana Hammir, is said to have married Devi Singh's daughter.[1] Bundi was taken by Devi Singh in 1341 A. D. and its rulers remained feudatories of the Maharanas till Emperor Akbar separated them from Mewar.

The Shringirishi inscription of 1428 A. D. says that Hammir attacked and took Cholakyapur, (Jilwara) from the Bhils and destroyed Pahalanpur (present Palanpur).[2] The *Ekling Mahatamya* also mentions these conquests and gives the name of the king of Palanpur as Raghava. The Eklingji inscription of A. D. 1488 (Samvat 1545) also mentions the wresting of Jilwara from the Bhils. The Shringirishi inscription mentions that Hammir conquered Idar, killing its ruler, Raja Jaitra.

The Chitor Mahavir temple inscription of A. D. 1438 (Samvat 1495) of Maharana Kumbha's time says that Hammir achieved victories and earned fame by putting to the sword innumerable Musalmans. This probably refers to the defeat of the Sultan of Delhi.

The Mokalji temple inscription of A. D. 1429 (Samvat 1485) says that Hammir built a temple with a gold *Kulus* on it, and excavated a tank in Chitor. This is the Anna Poorna temple mentioned above.

[1] *Chronicles*, Vol. I, p. 136.
[2] Palanpur was founded by Pahalandeva, younger brother of Dharavarsh, the Parmar King of Abu.

The fame of Hammir spread far and wide in the land, and the kings of Marwar, Dundhar (Jaipur) Gwalior, Chanderi, Raysen, Sikri, Kalpi, Abu and other places were ready to render willing service to the Maharana, "Extensive as was the power of Mewar before the Tatar occupation of Delhi, it could scarcely have surpassed the solidity of sway which she enjoyed during the two centuries following Hammir's recovery of the capital. From this event to the next invasion from the Cimmerian abode led by Babar, we have a succession of splendid names recorded in her annals, and though destined soon to be surrounded by new Muhammadan dynasties in Malwa and Gujrat as well as Delhi, yet successfully opposing them all. Her power was now so consolidated that she not only repelled armies from her territory, but carried war abroad leaving tokens of victory at Nagor, in Surashtra, and up to the walls of Delhi."

Hammir died full of years, leaving a name still honored in Mewar as one of the wisest and most gallant of her princes, and bequeathing a well-established and extensive power to his son, Khaitra Singh, who ascended the throne in Samvat 1421 A. D. 1364).

KUMARAPALA AND ARNORAJA[1]

The vengeful Rajput rode with thirsty spear
That never wearied of its draught of life.

SHERRING, *the Romance of the Twisted Spear.*

THE Gujrat chroniclers mention only one war between Kumārapāla, the successor of Siddharāja Jayasiṁha, king of Anhalwāṛā and Arṇorāja, king of Sapādalaksha, as the kingdom of Ajmer was then called. Recent research, however, shows that two distinct wars, separated from one another by several years, took place between the two combatants and that the incidents of the war mentioned by the Gujrāt writers belong some to the first and some to the second war.

The *Prabandha Chintāmaṇī* of Merutuṅga and the *Dvyāśraya Mahākāvya* of Hemachandra place the war they describe at the beginning of Kumārapāla's reign. The *Prabandha Chintāmani* says that prince Bāhaḍa, son of Udayana, who had been adopted by Siddharāja Jayasiṁha as his son, despising Kumārapāla, made himself a soldier of the king of the Sapādalaksha country. He, desiring to make war on Kumārapāla, having won over to his side all the officers in those parts with bribes, attentions and gifts, bringing with him the king of the Sapādalaksha country, surrounded with a large army, arrived on the borders of Gujrāt.[2]

The *Dvyāśraya* of Hemachandra says that the Rājā of Sapādalaksha, whose name was Ānna,

[1] Reprinted from the "*Indian Antiquary*", Vol. XLI, Part DXXII, August 1912 A.D.
[2] *Prabandha-Chintāmani* by Tawney, p. 121.

when he heard of the death of Jayasiṁha, though he had been a servant of that monarch, now thought the time was come for making himself known...... ....Ānna began to make friends with Ballāla, the king of Ujjain and the Rājās of the country on the west of Gujrāt, holding out threats to them as well as promises. Kumārapāla's spies made known to him that Ānna Rājā was advancing upon the western frontier of Gujrāt with an army.[1]

Both writers are agreed that the aggressor was Arṇorāja of Ajmer and that the war took place soon after the ascension to the throne of Kumārapāla which event took place in Samvat 1200 (A.D. 1143.)

The *Dvyāsraya*, in verse 34 of Canto XVI, mentions Vikramasiṁha as being the Paramāra Rājā of Ābū and is furtheron stated as having led the men of Jālor and followed Kumārapāla,[2] esteeming that Rājā as his lord.

Jinamaṇḍana in his *Kumārapāla Charitra* states that Kumārapāla while returning to Gujrāt from the war with Arṇorāja deposed Vikramasiṁha the Paramāra ruler of Ābū as he was disloyal to Kumārapāla, and placed on the throne in his place his nephew Yaśodhavala.

The inscription dated *Māgha sud* 14th, Samvat, 1202 (A.D. 1146), recently discovered by P. Gauri-shanker Ojha, the learned Superintendent of the Rajputānā Museum, Ajmer, in Ajārī (Sirohi State), 4 miles from Piṇḍwārā, and now in the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, shows that Yaśodhavala was king of Chandrāvatī (Ābū) in that year (*i.e.*, in Saṁvat 1202.) This Ajāri inscription coupled with the statement of Jinamaṇḍana about Yaśodhavala's coming to the throne of Ābū fixes the date of the war between

[1]Forbes' *Rāsmāla* (p. 142), which gives *Dvyāsraya's* account of the war.
[2]*Ibid* p. 143 (edition A. D. 1878.)

Kumārapāla and Arnorāja in which Vikramasiṁha was present as a vassal of Kumarāpāla sometime between Samvat 1200 and 1202.

Now, the Chitoṛ inscription of Kumārapāla dated Saṁvat 1207 (A. D. 1149-50) on a stone in the temple of Mokaljī, the object of which is to record Kumārapāla's visit to Chitor or Chitrakūṭa, distinctly states that "when this king (Kumārapāla) had defeated the ruler of Sākambhari and devastated the Sapādalaksha country (line eleven) he went to a place named Śālipura[1] (line twelve) and having pitched his camp there, he came to view the glorious beauty of the Chitrakūṭa mountain;....................Kumārapāla was delighted with what he saw there and having come to a temple of the god Samiddhesvara........... he worshipped the god and his consort and gave to the temple a village, the name of which has not been preserved (line twentysix)" etc.[2]

From Chitoṛ, Kumārapāla entered Mewāṛ, visited the temple of Mātāji in the village Pālṛi near Morwan, a few miles west of Nibhahera, and placed an inscription there dated Pausha, Saṁvat 1207.[3] This shows that Kumārapāla was at Chitor in *Pausha* or *Mārgāsīrshsa*, and that the war with Arṇoraja took place in the month of *Kārtika* or *Āsvina* of that year, *i.e.*, Samvat 1207.

The causes of the two wars appear also to have been distinct. The first war evidently took place because Arṇorāja, who had married Siddharāja-Jayasiṁha's daughter, Kāñchanadevi (*vide Prīthvirāja-vijaya*, Canto VII), espoused the cause of Siddharāja's adopted son Bāhaḍa and wished to place him on the throne of Gujrāt in place of the usurper Kumārapāla.

[1]Now called Salerā, about 4 miles from the foot of the hill on which the fortress of Chitor stands.

[2]*Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. II, p. 422.

[3]Tod's *Rājasthan*, Vol. II, p. 618, (edition 1832 A.D.)

The result of this war appears to have been unfavorable to Kumārapāla, as he hastened to make peace with Arṇorāja and gave the latter his sister to wife. He had also to take the field against the Mālwā king Ballāla who had succeeded in winning over Kumārapāla's two generals sent against him, and was advancing from the east towards Anhalwāra.

. The second war of Saṁvat 1207 appears to have taken place in consequence of Arṇoraja's ill-treatment of his queen Devaladevi, sister of Kumārapāla. Jinamaṇḍana in his *Kumārapāla-prabandha* says that Kumārapāla was incited to undertake the expedition against Arṇorāja by Devaladevī, who had been insulted by Arṇorāja and when threatened by her with the wrath of her brother, "the demon for kings," was kicked by Arṇorāja and told to go to her brother and tell him what she liked. Kumārapāla invaded Arṇorāja's country to avenge this insult. And as Devaladevī was given to Arṇorāja after the first war with Kumārapāla, this campaign of Kumārapāla against Arṇorāja must have taken place some years after the first war between them. All these things therefore point to the fact that there were two wars between Kumārapāla and Arṇorāja, the first of which took place sometime between Saṁvat 1200 and 1202 in which Arṇorāja was the aggressor, and the second in Saṁvat 1207 in which Kumārapāla invaded the territory of Arñorāja, king of Ajmer.

THE FORT OF ATHOON

There was a day when they were young and proud,
Banners on high and battles passed below;
But they who fought are in a bloody shroud,
And those which waved are shredless dust ere now,
And the bleak battlements shall bear no future blow.

BYRON, *Childe Harold.*

THERE are several historic forts in Rajputana. Much of the Rajput history revolves round them. They are associated with so many deeds of chivalry and heroism that the mere mention of some of them stirs the blood and elevates the souls of those who know the history of those forts and also know to what sublime heights of nobility, patriotic fervour and love of their homelands carried the men and women of this province in days gone by.

The most celebrated of these forts are the forts of Chitor, Kumbhalgarh, Ranthambhor, Garh Beetli or Taragarh of Ajmer and Achalgarh (Mount Abu). Those of lesser renown are a legion.

In the province of Ajmer, there are several forts besides the celebrated Garh Beetli of Ajmer (now known as Taragarh) which have played important parts in history. One of them is Athoon.

The fort of Athoon is one of the chief strongholds in Merwara and has played an important part in its history. Merwara is a hilly tract which separates the northern part of Mewar—historically the most important of the Rajput States—from Marwar, which lies to its west, and Ajmer which lies to the north. The Aravalli range of hills which commencing at the

ridge at Delhi runs through the whole of Rajputana, assumes to the south of Ajmer the form of a compact double range enclosing the greater part of the district of Merwara and attains near its southern border at Goramji a height of 3,075 ft. The area enclosed within this double range is a hilly rugged region; and before it came into British possession was covered with dense impenetrable forests. It was inhabited by Mers and contained several strongholds from which they issued to rob travellers, and plunder the country all round. Their depredations are a matter of history till the British finally took possession of the District in 1821 A. D. and cleared the dense jungle. Secure in their inaccessible fastnesses, they continued for centuries to ply their trade of plundering the neighbouring villages of Mewar, Marwar and Ajmer. With the decline of the Mughal power and the rise of the Mahrattas and the consequent weakening of the military strength of Mewar and Marwar owing to Mahratta inroads, the Mers became more and more bold, their predatory activities increased and the villages lying on the borders of Merwara became a regular prey to this scourge.

History records that when in 1195 A. D., Qutbuddin Aibak, the Afghan general of Sultan Shahbuddin Ghori started from Ajmer to invade Anhalwara Patan, the Mers combined with the Rajputs of Gujrat and inflicted a severe defeat on Qutbuddin, who fled wounded to Ajmer and shut himself up in the fortress of Taragarh. The Mers invested the fortress and only retired to their hills after a six months' siege when reinforcements arrived from Afghanishtan. They plundered the camp of Emperor Jahangir in 1616 A. D. and later harassed the army of Aurangzeb, when foiled in his attempt to conquer Mewar, the Emperor marched towards the Deccan to meet the advancing tide of

Mahratta aggression.

In the eighteenth century, on the decline of the Mughal power, the Maharajas of Jaipur and Jodhpur and the Maharana of Mewar severally made several attempts to reduce Merwara to submission; but all such attempts failed. Maharaja Sawai Jaisingh in 1725 A. D. invaded Merwara with a large army and demolished the forts of Jhak and Kalinjar which had been vacated by the Mers who had retired to the hills. The Jaipur army, after suffering severe losses in their attempts to reach the retreats of the Mers returned to Jaipur. In 1778 A. D. Maharaja Bijai Singh of Jodhpur despatched a force against Chang, and in the following year sent Thakur Arjun Singh of Raipur to reduce Kot Kirana. In 1790 the Thakur of Kantalia with the reinforcement sent by the Marwar Durbar attacked Bhailan but no impression was made on the Mers by any of these invasions. In 1800 A. D., Sivaji Nana, the Mahratta governor of Ajmer negotiated a treaty with the Mers in order to put a stop to their depredation in the villages of the province of Ajmer. But when these depredations did not cease, Nana's successor Bala Rao invaded Merwara with 60,000 men. But even this expedition failed to achieve its object and Bala Rao returned to Ajmer. In 1810 A. D. Raja Man Singh of Marwar attacked Jhak, but without any useful result.

ORIGIN OF THE MERS

The Mers declare that they are the descendants of Hariraj (the younger brother of Emperor Prithviraj), the last Hindu King of Ajmer. Some historians, however, say that the Mers and the Meos of Mewat are the descendants of the Kshatriyas, who came to India in large numbers and overran the whole of Rajputana, Gujrat, Sind and Western Punjab in the second century A. D. They were followed by the Shaks from Eastern Persia. Both the Kshatrapas and the

Shaks were, however, eventually overcome by the Parmār and other Rajputs and their remnants retired into hilly tracts and inhospitable regions and began to maintain themselves by robbery and plunder. A large number of them settled in the hilly tract of Merwara and regions lying to its east and west. They founded small principalities and their rulers were called Rawats. Some of them became converts to Islam and began to call themselves Merats and their leaders became known as Khans.

Vardhanpura (Badnor) Chang, Athoon and Jhak were amongst the principal settlements of the Mers. With the rise of the Sisodia Power, the Mers were pressed back on the Mewar side; and by the time of Maharana Lakha (A. D. 1382-1397), Vardhanpura passed out of their hands and was incorporated in Mewar. Athoon lying next to Badnor, naturally came into greater prominence and had to bear the brunt of Rajput reprisals.

Plunder was the sole means of subsistence of the Mers and Merats. Tradition says that when Maharana Lakha attacked Vardhanpura, the Khan of Athoon joined hands with the Maharana The Maharana after raising Vardhanpura to the ground, built the present town of Badnor, and in order to protect it from future raids from the Merats of Athoon and Jhak and the Mers of other places, brought about an alliance between Badnor and Athoon. This is proved by the fact that on the death of the Khan of Athoon, the Thakur of Badnor always performed the ceremony of sword-binding at the accession of the new Khan to the Gaddi and *vice versa*. The importance of Athoon is also proved by the fact that whenever the Khan of Athoon went to make his Mujra (do obeisance) to the Maharana of Mewar, he made a present of Rs. 100 and received a horse as reward.

Of the strongholds built by the Mers, Athoon was

one of the most important. As no regular researches in the history of Merwara have yet been made, no authentic historical records are available to show when this fort of Athoon was first built. Tradition says that Dooda Khan built it 600 years ago. Its Khans were amongst the most powerful of the Mer chieftains. Before the present fort of Athoon was built, the principality was known as Dhawalgarh and the Raja of Dhawalgarh, as he was then called, is said to have been entitled to the seventeenth seat in the Durbar of the Maharana, the principal nobles of Mewar occupying the first sixteen.

We find Athoon in existence during the Mughal period of Indian history. This fort was a *point d'appui* during the operations of 1819 A. D. to 1821 A. D., when the Mers and Merats were subjugated for the first time in history, and the turbulent marauders compelled to settle down as agriculturists, their swords being battered into ploughshares.

While Chang is mentioned as having been reduced by the celebrated Maharaja Hammirdeva of Ranthambhor (about 1285 A. D.) one of the earliest mentions of the important fort of Athoon is to be met with in the account of the conquest of Vardhanpura (Badnor) by Maharana Lakha in 1383 A. D.

The history of Badnor says that in Kartik, Samvat 1762, (November 1705 A. D.) the Mers of *Mugra Merwara* and the Khans of Athoon, Chang and Jhak began to make depredations in Mewar and the Maharana sent an expedition against them under Dhabhai Nagji. But he failed to overpower them. The Maharana then sent Thakur Jaswant Singh of Badnor who attacked Haji khan at Kalinjar and inflicted a defeat on him.

The same year, Haji Khan of Athoon raided Harda in Mewar and carried its Hakim prisoner to Athoon. Thakur Jaswant Singh thereupon invaded Merwara, killed Haji Khan in a pitched battle and destroyed the

fort of Chang and released the Hakim of Harda from captivity.

The Mers raised their heads again in 1713 A. D. and the Maharana sent Thakur Amar Singh of Nibhera against them; but Amar Singh and his son Akhshai Singh were killed in the first encounter, and the army retired. The Maharana then sent Thakur Jawahar Singh of Badnor, who attacked Athoon and a battle was fought on Kartik Sud 9th; but it was indecisive. In the meanwhile, Sahib Singh, brother of Thakur Amar Singh of Nibhera who had gone to Delhi with presents from the Maharana on King Farrukhsayar's accession to the throne, returned and determined to avenge his brother's death. Assisted by the troops of Badnor, Deogarh and Shahpura, he inflicted a decisive defeat on the Khan of Athoon, who also had been reinforced by other Mer chieftains.

In 1730 A. D. the Maharana sent an expedition against the Khan of Athoon and other Mer Thakurs under Thakur Jai Singh of Badnor. Thakur Jai Singh invited Thakur Sultan Singh of Masuda to co-operate with him in the enterprise. In the war that followed, Sultan Singh was killed and Jai Singh was wounded, but the Mers were defeated.

Hari Khan, *Khan* of Athoon, again commenced his depredations in Mewar. These marauders used to make raids in Mewar which extended to Bhilwara, Māndal and Chitor, and a fourth share of the loot used to go to the Khan, who commanded a band of 400 horsemen. One tradition says that his retainers consisted of 80 horses and 600 matchlocks. Thakur Jai Singh now resolved to rid the country of Hari Khan and took up his position in a pass with his two brothers, Sangram Singh and Nahar Singh. As Hari Khan returned with booty after one of his expeditions, he was attacked and killed by Jai Singh after a sanguinary fight. Later, in 1793 A. D. (Samvat 1850) Jai Singh son of

Gaj Singh the great grandson of Jai Singh of Badnor attacked Athoon and took posession of it, and demolished the forts of Saroth and Ajitgarh and excavated a lake at the latter place.

With the passing of Ajmer into British possession in 1818 A. D., the days of Mer aggression came to an end. On the complaint of the inhabitants of the villages bordering on Merwara, Mr. Wilder. the first Superintendent of Ajmer, opened negotiations with the Mer leaders of Jhak, Lulwa, Shamgarh and Athoon to cease making depredations into the British province of Ajmer. These efforts proving fruitless, Mr. Wilder represented to the Marquis of Hastings that the aggression on the part of the Mers would not cease till Merwara was subdued and the Mer marauders compelled to settle down on land. The Governor-General directed Col. Hall, Quarter-Master-General at Nasirabad to start operations against the Mers. Major James Tod who had recently been appointed Political Agent at Udaipur persuaded the Maharana to send an expedition against the Mers and Merats under Thakur Salim Singh of Rupaheli. These combined operations resulted in the final subjugation of Merwara in A. D. 1821. During these operations, the fort of Athoon played a prominent part.

A British detachment occupied Jhak and Lulwa in March 1819. In 1820 A. D. Thakur Salim Singh after inflicting a defeat on the Mers at Borwa and taking possession of that stronghold, advanced and stormed the fort of Athoon and took possession of it. But Salim Singh returning to Rupaheli, the Merats again took possession of Athoon, Jhak and Lulwa. A general insurrection broke out[1] in November, 1820 in Merwara and the Thanas (military outposts) established by the Maharana of Udaipur and the British Government in

[1] Brooke's *History of Mewar*, p. 125.

the chief centres of Merwara were overpowered and destroyed. Thereupon, Col. Hall sent Lt.-Col. W. G. Maxwell with a strong force and a few light guns against Athoon and Borwa to quell the insurrection. This force divided itself into three parts and invaded Merwara from three sides, Todgarh, Kharwa and Masuda respectively. The chief objective was, "The strongholds of Athoon and Bairar in which the Mers had been accustomed to defy whatever troops the native States might send against them."[1]

Borwa was taken without much difficulty but Athoon offered stout resistance. Bhopat Khan, the Khan of Athoon shut himself up in the "strong fort built of pucca masonry, capable of resisting any force not provided with breaching artillery."[2] As there were no metalled roads, it was not easy to bring heavy artillery from Ajmer. "An attempt to blow up the gateway failed. Order was then given to abandon the gun and retire, so hot a fire was kept up from the walls. This was not done before a great number of men had been killed and wounded on our side."[3] During the night, however, Bhopat Khan evacuated the fort and retired to Ramgarh Sarotan.

After taking Athoon, the force advanced to Bairar and then to Barsawada (now Todgarh) where a fort was built. News came here that Bhopat Khan was in Ramgarh. A detachment of eight companies and a few guns were sent atonce against Bhopat Khan. After a difficult all-night march, this force reached Ramgarh early in the morning and surrounded the place. In the fight that ensued, Bhopat Khan was killed with 150 men and his son Lakha Khan was captured with 200 followers. The whole of Merwara was thus reduced and brought under submission.

[1] Brooke's *History of Mewar*, p. 125.
[2] Colonel Dixon's *Sketch of Merwara*, p. 22.
[3] Ibid.

PART IV

PROBLEMS OF AJMER-MERWARA

THE CONSTITUTIONAL FUTURE

OF

AJMER MERWARA[1]

And statesmen at her council met
Who knew the seasons when to take
Occasion by the hand, and make
The bounds of freedom wider yet

TENNYSON, *To the Queen.*

AJMER MERWARA is a small British Province situated in the heart of Rajputana, and is surrounded by the important Rajput States of Jodhpur, Jaipur, Udaipur and Kishengarh. It is 2710 sq. miles in area, and has a population of 6,60,292, according to the Census of 1931 A.D. For administrative purposes, the province is divided into two districts, Ajmer and Merwara; and into three Tahsils. The district of Ajmer lies to the north of Merwara, and was obtained from Scindhia in 1818 A. D. The district of Merwara was formed by combining the hilly tracts of the States of Marwar and Mewar adjoining Ajmer, which were temporarily placed under British administration by the two Durbars for bringing under control the turbulent Mers, with a part of the district of Ajmer, about the year 1820 A.D. Merwara remained a separate district from Ajmer under a Superintendent till 1842 A. D., in which year, the two districts were united and placed under one officer, Col. Dixon, who was styled Superintendent of

[1]Note submitted to the Consultative Committee of the Government of India at the request of its Secretary, Mr. Latifi, I.C.S., on 12 May, 1932 A.D.

Ajmer and Merwara. In 1853 A.D., Col. Dixon was made Commissioner of Ajmer Merwara. Ajmer Merwara remained a part of the N. W. Provinces (now United Provinces of Agra and Oudh) till 1871 A.D., when it was placed under the Foreign and Political Department of the Government of India. Thus, Ajmer Merwara was till 1871 A.D. a part of the N.W.P., and was administered by the Lt. Governor of that Province. Since 1871 A.D., Ajmer Merwara has been a Chief Commissionership and is administered by the Agent to the Governor-General, Rajputana—who is ex-officio Chief Commissioner of Ajmer-Merwara—under the Political Department of the Government of India.

STRATEGICAL POSITION

Ajmer, the chief city of the province, has a population of 1,19,524 and is situated at the head of the watershed of India. The plateau on which the city of Ajmer stands marks the highest elevation of the plains of Hindustan; and from the hills which surround it, the country slopes to all points of the compass. Its superb strategical position in the centre of the region inhabited by the warlike races of Rajputana, and its picturesque situation, hemmed in as it is on all sides by hills and adorned with a beautiful lake, have made the place celebrated in history.

ADMINISTRATIVE ISOLATION

Its administrative isolation since 1871 A.D. when it was transferred to the Political Department of the Government of India solely to facilitate British political control of the various States of Rajputana (*vide Ashworth Committee's Report*) and its subjection to the Scheduled Districts Act XIV of 1874 in the year 1877 A.D. have seriously impaired its administration, undermined its importance, and retarded its progress.

The present position of Ajmer Merwara is that of a minor administration under the direct control of the Government of India in the Political Department. Though the Legislative Assembly has legislative authority in the province, yet practically all its laws are made by the Governor-General's Executive Council. Though its Budget is nominally passed by the Legislative Assembly, it has never been discussed in that Assembly; and if the procedure and the constitution remain as they are, there is no chance of its ever being subjected in future to scrutiny and discussion in the Central Legislature. The people of the province have, unlike those of other provinces, no voice in its administration. The inauguration of the Minto-Morley Reforms in 1909 A.D. and the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms in 1919 A.D. completely ignored Ajmer Merwara.

RETRANSFER TO U.P.

In 1921 A.D., a committee known as the Ashworth Committee, was appointed to consider the future position of this province in the Constitution of India. It took evidence, and after full investigation and a careful consideration of the question, recommended its transfer to the United Provinces. But nothing has been done to give effect to this proposal; nor has anything else been done to enable this province to participate in the general political advance of the country under the Montford Reforms, except giving it in 1924 A.D. a right to return a member to the Legislative Assembly.

Thus, so far as its administration is concerned, not only has Ajmer Merwara been rigidly excluded from sharing in the political progress of the country, resulting from the various progressive changes in the Government but I regret to have to say that the tendency recently has been to deprive it even of the nominal benefit of returning a member to the Legislative Assembly.

The Indian Statutory Commission appointed by His Majesty the King Emperor in 1927 A.D. in response to the persistent demand of the Central Legislature, commenced its work in 1928 A.D. and submitted its report in 1930 A.D The Report of the Commission, so far as Ajmer Merwara is concerned, is not only extremely "reactionary" but is animated by a spirit of hostility to Indian aspirations. The Commission formed its opinion without recording any evidence or consulting public opinion or any opinion in Ajmer Merwara: and, in stating that opinion, it has shown a complete contempt for public opinion, public feeling and people's aspiration, by disdaining to give any reasons for its arbitrary conclusions. Without giving any facts or figures, without assigning any grounds for its opinion, it has simply dismissed the question of the future administration of Ajmer Merwara with the remark that "neither can the form of Government in (Delhi or) Ajmer Merwara be usefully altered" (Vol II, p. 107), and that "for the present, the representative of Ajmer Merwara (in the Legislative Assembly) should be *nominated* by the Chief Commissioner after ascertaining the views of responsible "citizens". (Vol. II, p. 122.)

This cavalier treatment of a province that stands second in point of literacy in the whole of India and ranks with the most advanced in social and cultural amenities of life, and which has been conspicuous for its loyalty, and which furnished the largest percentage of military recruits of any province of India to defend Great Britain in her dire need, has caused universal disappointment, disaffection and alarm in Ajmer Merwara. The recommendation of the Simon Commission was so openly and definitely reactionary and retrograde, that even the Local Government of this province, found it impossible to support it. The Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner of Ajmer Merwara

giving his views on the recommendations of the Indian Statutory Commission, says:—

"No reason have been given by the Commission for depriving the province of a privilege which it has enjoyed since January 1924. The attitude of the province as a whole towards the civil disobedience movement has been sane and loyal. A change, therefore, from representation by election to representation by nomination in the absence of substantial grounds for so retrograde a measure, seems to me not only unjustifiable, but politically unsound."—*Views of Local Governments on the Recommendations of the Indian Statutory Commission*, 1930, p. 429.

But the Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner's recommendations are no less reactionary than those of the Simon Commission; for he recommends that the member for Ajmer Merwara in the Federal Assembly should be "chosen at a joint session of the members of the Municipalities of Ajmer, Beawar and Kekri, the Cantonment Board of Nasirabad and the District Board of Ajmer Merwara", thus securing exactly the same result as nomination by him would yield, by having the member of the Assembly chosen by local bodies, forty-five per cent of the members of which are nominated by him.

GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL

The Government of India's Despatch dated the 20th of September 1930, to the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India, forwarding their "Views on the further progress which might now be made towards the development of responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire," is equally disappointing. Ajmer Merwara has been disposed of in a paragraph of 13 lines, para 81 of the Despatch. In this short paragraph, the Government of India express their conclusion without giving any reasons for differentiating Ajmer Merwara from other provinces, many of which are behind it in possessing qualifications

which prove fitness for further political advance. The Despatch says that "in agreement with the Commission and with the Chief Commissioner, we consider that at present no constitutional reform can suitably be introduced in Ajmer Merwara."

NO REASONS

No reasons whatever are given for denying Ajmer Merwara a share in the reforms. It is difficult to understand the force of the words 'at present' in the sentence quoted above. Does it mean that so long as Ajmer Merwara remains loyal and peaceful and does not, like the N.W.F.P. develop a Red Shirt movement and give trouble to the authorities, no political rights will be given to the province? Or, does it mean that so long as Ajmer Merwara remains an isolated small unit, it must remain a non-Regulation province subject to all the disabilites of a Scheduled district, and should not hope to share with the other provinces of India, even in the smallest degree, the rights, privileges and benefits of responsible Government?

SHADOW OF ELECTION

The Government of India further say:—"We agree with the Chief Commissioner that the respresentative of the province in the Assembly should as now be elected, and should not, as suggested by the Commission be nominated". While we note with some relief that the Government do not favour nomination, they have failed to state whether they also contemplate like the Local Government giving to the people the shadow of election, instead of the substance, however small may be the value of that substance. If the words "as now" mean anything, they can only mean election of the representative by the 'general public' of Ajmer Merwara as is the case at

present, and not as the Chief Commissioner suggests, by a few local bodies which are completely controlled by the Local Government. Or, is it, that the Government of India's agreement with the Chief Commissioner as stated above only means that the Government are against nomination, but favour election by local bodies as against election by the public of the province? The Government should, in the circumstances, have stated their views more clearly than they have done.

I have dealt at some length with the views and recommendation of the Simon Commission, the Local Government and the Government of India as they show that the real attitude of the authorities, who hold in their hands the political future of Ajmer Merwara, is neither sympathetic nor just, and that nothing in the way of justice or political advance of any kind can be expected, until this attitude of Government undergoes a radical change.

The question, therefore, before us is as to what should be done to let the people of Ajmer Merwara have the same right to participate in the new reforms, and enjoy the same political rights and privileges as the rest of India, in the same way as they are subject to the same duties and obligations as the people of other parts of India The Government cannot, with justice, refuse to Ajmer Merwara, representation in all representative institutions on the same lines and to the same extent, and allow the province the same share in shaping its destinies, as it does to the people of other provinces, who pay the same taxes and are under the same obligations to Government as the people of Ajmer Merwara. The clear aim of the province being, full participation in the reforms, and the enjoyment of all the rights and previleges granted to the other provinces under the new constitution, we have to consider the means to be adopted to achieve this aim. Now there are only two ways to achieve this:

(1) Making Ajmer Merwara an autonomous province with the same powers and status as the other provinces, or

(2) Amalgamating it with a major province.

The chief objection to granting Ajmer, if it remains a separate unit, the same constitution as the other provinces, is its small size and its small revenue. The objections to its amalgamation with the United Provinces fall under two heads :—

(1) Those taken by the Government of the United Provinces, and

(2) Those which the people of Ajmer Merwara are *alleged* to have to such amalgamation.

The objections taken by the United Provinces Government are, as stated in the Indian Statutory Commission's Report, Vol. I, page 328:—

(*a*) The great distance of Ajmer Merwara from the United Provinces, and

(*b*) Its differences of laws, customs and administrative interests.

A further objection, as stated by the Home Member of the Government of India, is that,

(*c*) "Ajmer Merwara is a deficit province."

The objection which the people of Ajmer Merwara are alleged to have to amalgamation is thus stated in the Statutory Commission's Report, Vol. I, pages 328-29:—

(*d*) "To the majority of the inhabitants of the province, the preservation of their distinctive culture and the continuance of the methods of administration with which they are familiar are of greater moment than Reforms."

OBJECTIONS EXAMINED

Let us briefly examine these objections. The objection to making Ajmer Merwara an autonomous province with the same powers and status as the other provinces (for instance, the newly created N. W. F. P.),

is that its size and revenue are too small to enable it to have the same administrative machinery as those provinces. There is no doubt some basis for the objection. But it may be urged that there is no necessity to have in Ajmer Merwara the whole of the departmental machinery that obtains in a big province. The questions to deal with here will be simple in nature, and if one Executive Councillor and one minister with a council of 41 members are considered sufficient to deal with all the financial, legislative, economic and other administrative questions that will arise in the N.W.F.P., a province almost six times as large as Ajmer Merwara, surely one Minister on a thousand rupees a month with a small and efficient establishment and a Council of 21 members should be able to deal satisfactorily with all administrative questions and legislative measures that will arise in Ajmer Merwara. And if the Government of India can afford to give a crore of rupees every year to the N.W.F. Province, it ought to be able to give ten or fifteen lakhs a year to a province which in its loyalty, peacefulness and cultural status, yields to none in India.

The only difficulty, however, which we can foresee is as to who will take the place of the Governor of an autonomous province, the A. G. G. for Rajputana being out of the question. An officer on Rs. 3,000 a month to be called Governor or Superintendent or Chief Commissioner or by some other name could be appointed to be the head of the administration and to exercise the same administrative functions as the Governor of a province. With suitable assistance from the central revenues which might bear the same relation to the annual grant of one crore to N. W. F. P., as the size of Ajmer Merwara bears to that of the Frontier Province, we can well achieve the object in view, which is to give the people of Ajmer Merwara the same voice in making laws and sanctioning expenditure for the province as the peoples of other provinces possess.

AMALGAMATION WITH THE U.P.

I now come to the objections taken to the amalgamation of Ajmer Merwara with the United Provinces. The objections taken by the U.P. Government to accept amalgamation, when it was consulted in the matter, were either based on misconception of facts or on an exaggerated view of administrative difficulties. They are:

(1) Great distance between the U. P. and Ajmer Merwara, the distance between the two being nowhere less than 150 miles.

(2) "Its difference of laws, customs and administrative interests"

As regards (1) it may be urged that when the Lieut.-Governor of the N.W.P. could satisfactorily administer the Ajmer Merwara province as a part of the N W.P. till 1871 A D., at a time when there were no railways, it is difficult to believe that the difficulties of distance in these days of railways, telegraphs, motor cars, aeroplanes, telephones, and other mechanical devices to ensure rapid locomotion and easy communication are deserving of serious consideration. The distance between the southern and northern parts of the Madras Presidency is very nearly double that between Lucknow and Ajmer; and many places in the Bombay and the Madras Presidencies are more distant from the seat of their respective Governments than Ajmer is from Lucknow.

It may also be remembered, and it is admitted by Government, that Ajmer Merwara was separted from the N.W.P. in 1871 A.D., not because the U.P. Government complained of any difficulty in administering a distant or isolated area, but because the Government of India found it convenient to do so, in order to facilitate the working of its policy of political control of the Indian States of Rajputana.

The second objection which, according to the Indian

Statutory Commission, the U. P. Government have to amalgamation, is "the difference of laws, customs and administrative interests." Nowhere in the published reports of Government has the nature of this difference been stated or explained So far as I am aware, there is absolutely no difference of laws between the U. P. and Ajmer Merwara. The same school of Hindu law, 'Mitakshara', governs the Hindu population of the two provinces. The Muslim law is the same in the U. P. and Ajmer Merwara. The law governing the Istimarardars of Ajmer Merwara contained in the Ajmer Land and Revenue Regulation of 1877 A. D. has been bodily taken word for word from the Oudh Talukdars' Regulation. All laws in force in the U. P. except those required to protect special interests peculiar to a part of that province, are in force in Ajmer Merwara.

CUSTOMS

As regards customs, all those who are acquainted with the two provinces know very well that there are no such differences as are alleged to exist. Customs prevalent in the outlying parts of the U. P. differ far more materially from the customs of the central parts of the U P., like Agra, Meerut and Cawnpur, than the customs prevailing in Ajmer differ from those of the above-named places. As for administrative interests and differences that there may be, do not and should not interfere with the administration of this province by the Governor of the U. P. Administrative interests of Oudh differ from those of Agra, yet both are satisfactorily administered by the same Government. And in this matter, the isolation of Ajmer-Merwara would be a help rather than a disadvantage.

REAL OBJECTION

The real objection of the U. P. Government however, has not been mentioned in the Statutory

Commission's Report. It was stated by the Hon'ble Sir Alexander Muddiman, Home Member of the Government of India, when replying to my speech moving a resolution in the Legislative Assembly on 24th February, 1925 asking for the establishment of a Legislative Council for Ajmer Merwara. He said (*Legislative Assembly Debates. Vol.V, part II, p. 1467*):

The Government of India when they first considered how this district (Ajmer Merwara) might be brought within the scope of the Reforms scheme, proposed that it should be transferred to the United Provinces............Well, it takes two to make a bargain.......... The United Provinces Government seeing that it is a bad bargain, were not inclined to take it over. They were going to lose money over it, and provinces in these days, owing to the rigorous check exercised by popular Assemblies, are very particular not to take over propositions which are not paying propositions......If, in the near future Ajmer Merwara is able to balance its budget and stands as a paying proposition and not a losing proposition, *I have no doubt the attitude of the U. P. might be modified and I have no doubt that, if so, the attitude of the Government of India might be modified too.*

This speech of Sir Alexander Muddiman gives the real objection of the U. P. Government to take over Ajmer Merwara, the objection being that Ajmer Merwara is a deficit province. In the first place, when Ajmer Merwara was a part of the U. P. and the Government of India took it under its direct control for a certain purpose in 1871 A. D., and the Government of U. P. did not object to it; now that the Government of India wish to return the province to the U. P. thus restoring the 'status quo,' the U. P. Government should not in fairness, object to it. The U. P. Government had no choice when Ajmer was first tacked on to it early in the Nineteenth century. It had no choice when Ajmer Merwara was taken away from it. In equity and justice, therefore, it should not object to its restoration.

NOT A DEFICIT PROVINCE

Apart from that, Ajmer-Merwara is not a deficit province. The Inchcape Committee, which examined the matter, showed (*vide*, page 273) that of all the ten minor administrations, including the N.W. F.P., Delhi, Coorg and Baluchistan, Ajmer Merwara is the only surplus province. It is only owing to a wrong representation of facts that the expenditure on Ajmer-Merwara is shown as higher than its income. This is done by including in the expenditure, the large item of interest paid by the Government treasury at Ajmer to holders of Government securities. This item has as much to do with the administrative expenditure of Ajmer-Merwara as the Consultative sub-committee of the Round Table Conference has to do with the introduction of the Roman script by Turkey in its schools. Speaking in the Legislative Assembly during the budget discussion on 5 March, 1931 (*Legislative Assembly Debates* for 1931, Vol. II, page 1513), I said: "According to the latest published Administration report of Ajmer-Merwara (that for 1927-28) the total income of Ajmer-Merwara is Rs. 27,65,371-3-1 and the total expenditure Rs. 26,10,038-7-7. In the balance-sheet of the Administration Report, however, a sum of Rs. 15,80,092-15-1, which is paid as interest on public debt from the Government Treasury, Ajmer, is included on the expenditure side."

Speaking again this year, during the general discussion on the Budget on 9th May, 1932, I said:—"According to the Budget estimates before us the income of Ajmer Merwara is, after excluding currency and receipt in aid of superannuation, Rs. 16,96,600; and the expenditure Rs. 14,79,000 to which if we add all expenditure under other heads, excluding of course interest on ordinary debt, currency, political and territorial pensions, superannuation pensions, etc., which

practically have nothing to do with the administrative expenses of Ajmer, it comes to Rs. 15,07,500, thus leaving a credit balance of Rs. 1,89,100. If we deduct from this, say, Rs. 89,000 on account of civil works which come under a separate head, still there is a saving of one lakh. Even if we give up the whole of Rs. 1,89,000, still Ajmer is found to pay its way and is in no sense of the term a deficit province."

PLEA FOR RECONSIDERATION

In the face of these facts and the additional fact that the administrative expenditure in Ajmer-Merwara is further proposed to be reduced to the extent of Rs. 3 lakhs as a measure of retrenchment, it cannot be disputed that Ajmer-Merwara is a surplus province, and, in no sense of the term, a deficit one. Will Government in the light of these facts and the declaration made by the Hon'ble the Home Member in the Legislative Assembly on 24th February, 1925, reconsider the matter?

We now come to the objection which some of the people of Ajmer-Merwara are alleged to have to amalgamation with the United Provinces. The chief objection as stated by the Indian Statutory Commission is this:—"To the majority of the inhabitants of the province, the preservation of their distinctive culture and the continuance of the methods of administration with which they are familiar are of much greater moment than the reforms." The "distinctive culture" of Ajmer-Merwara is a piece of news to most of us. We never heard of such distinctive culture. The Ashworth Committee does not mention it. And as it has nowhere been defined or described, I must leave it to take care of itself.

As for the statement that the people prefer administrative methods with which they are familiar, to reforms, there is no doubt that if it means that the

people like to be governed in the way they are at present governed rather than in the way the new reforms would provide, I say without hesitation that it is a thoroughly mistaken idea and is a misrepresentation of the people's views. The Ashworth Committee's report shows that many even of those people who then opposed amalgamation with the U. P. were thoroughly dissatisfied with the existing form and methods of Government. They asked for a change in the judicial administration and the transfer of the administration of the province from the *Political* to the *Home Department* of the Government of India.

The real objection of those people who did not favour amalgamation was purely sentimental. They said that Ajmer-Merwara would loss its individuality. *i. e.* its character as a separate entity, and would be treated by the U. P. Government as Mainpuri, Etawah or any other district of that province.

IMAGINARY OBJECTIONS

In addition to this, several other objections were raised, most of which are fanciful or imaginary. They are enumerated in pages 41 and 42 of the Ashworth Committee Report. Of the 17 objections there stated, I will take the most important of them, those numbered 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14 and 16 (a) and show their nature :—

(1) "From a province it will be reduced to the status at most of a district. This will be a great fall."

Verily, there are people who would deliberately prefer the shadow to the substance. But the masses whose benefit is the determining factor in the matter, think that the status of a district of a self-governing province is always preferable to that of a province autocratically governed.

(2) "In disputes with the surrounding States of Rajputana, Ajmer, if united to the U. P., will

always be at a disadvantage and a settlement of these will be far more costly than at present which is done by means of a sort of family arrangement, *i.e.*, provincial and local punchayats."

"Sort of family arrangement" is delicious; but who has ever heard of provincial and local panchayats of the people themselves? Do they exist anywhere in Ajmer-Merwara? Should a dispute with an Indian State occur, Ajmer as a part of the U. P. would be in a far stronger position than now, and the boundary being now well defined, what disputes are likely to occur? The only one that occurred in recent times, that between Ajmer and Kishengarh about an irrigation matter, was decided by an Irrigation Engineer deputed by the U. P. Government because there is no Irrigation Engineer in the province of Ajmer-Merwara. Dealing with the matter, the present Chief Commissioner in his Memorandum to the Ashworth Committee (p. 33) said, "I do not think that in practice this objection has much validity. I do not remember any question arising with the surrounding States while I was Commissioner which necessitated a reference to the local administration; and many instances *e. g.*, Lalitpur in the United Provinces, could be quoted where isolated portions of the United Provinces are surrounded by Indian States under the Central India Agency without giving rise to any practical difficulties.

Another objection is:—

(6) "Its administration will suffer in efficiency because as a small district, it could not claim to have an exclusive Commissioner, Inspector-General of Police, a senior I. M. S. man. Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Excise Officer and two senior revenue officers."

The result, on the contrary, will be greater efficiency. The Ashworth Committee Report says:—

"Amalgamation with the U. P. is the only means of *securing* to the province *administrative efficiency*", and that "amalgamation will substitute in the superior posts of the administration, officers trained in district administration for officers from the political department who are usually not so trained."

Most of the officers enumerated in the objection quoted above must remain after amalgamation. Nay, Ajmer-Merwara will have the advice and the guidance of highly trained senior officers in all departments.

EDUCATION

The next objection is:—

(7) "In the matter of education, Ajmer will simply be ruined............The United Provinces Government is not expected, under the circumstances, to spend so much in this deficit area over the Government College with a negligible number of students." This is not a true statement of facts as they now exist. Ajmer-Merwara is not a deficit area: the number of students in the Government College, Ajmer, is not negligible. The number is 250 and a large number of applications for admission were last year refused for want of room. Moreover in Ajmer-Merwara primary education is nowhere compulsory. Ajmer will doubtless improve in education, rather than deteriorate.

A further objection is:—

(8) "It is very doubtful if the Chiefs College will continue in Ajmer after it is denuded of its paraphernalia and status." This is not a valid objection. The political progress of Ajmer has nothing to do with the Mayo College, and there is no connection between the existence of the Mayo College at Ajmer and the amalgamation of Ajmer-Merwara with the U. P. Moreover, the Principal of

[1]The number is 350 now and would be 500 if there were room in the College.

the Mayo College in his memorandum to the Ashworth Committee did not anticipate any difficulty from the Mayo College remaining an Imperial institution while the province of Ajmer-Merwara becomes a district of the United Provinces.

ASTOUNDING OBJECTION

Then there is the astounding objection:—

(14) "The local and Police officers are likely to become more irresponsible and autocratic." This fear is quite unfounded; the result will be exactly the opposite. The supervision and the "vigilant watch" exercised on the subordinates will remain as it is; the only change will be that the head-quarters of the administration, instead of being in Mount Abu will be in Lucknow and Nainital. It will, be controlled by an Indian Minister and will thus become far more amenable to public opinion and responsive to public feeling.

The next objection is that "if Ajmer is attached to the United Provinces, crime of a serious nature will increase at least tenfold." This is a hysterical outburst. Evidently the United Provinces, according to people who hold this opinion, are a criminal settlement and the Government of that province an incompetent authority; else, how will serious crime increase, at least tenfold and possibly sixty-fold, by Ajmer being governed by the U. P. Government? No reasons have been given for holding this absurd view, particularly when it is a well known fact that the higher Police officers of Ajmer-Merwara are even now on the cadre of the United Provinces Police Department and come from that province.

It is true that some people believe that Ajmer-Merwara, by being amalgamated with the U. P. would be neglected. It is true that personal contact with

the head of the administration would be rare, but as constitutional rule develops, the personal element will become more and more unimportant. Moreover, the disadvantages entailed by the merger would be far outweighed by the solid advantages of a rule which would be far less autocratic and far more democratic, and which as time goes on, will become, to a greater and greater extent, responsible to the people.

OFFICIAL OPINION

Official opinion is unanimous that considering the size and the situation of Ajmer-Merwara, the only way in which it can receive the full benefit of the reformed constitution is to become a part of a Major Province. In 1921 A. D. a Committee was appointed by Government to take evidence and report whether, in order to enable Ajmer-Merwara to participate in the Reforms and on other grounds, it would be advisable to 'retransfer' Ajmer-Merwara to the United Provinces. The conclusion to which the Committee, with only one member dissenting, arrived at after a thorough investigation of the question, and after recording official and non-official opinion of all classes was, that "*merger is the only means of securing to the province complete participation in the Reforms and Administrative efficiency.*" (p. 16). The Report further says:—" To sum up, merger appears to us to be the most effective and the *least expensive* methods of securing to the province administrative efficiency and participation in the Reforms." (p. 18). The Committee give a clear warning ***that if Ajmer Merwara remains a separate unit, "the people of Ajmer Merwara must understand that they cannot be given real participation in the Reforms.*"** (p. 18).

The Hon'ble Sir Leonard Reynolds, the present

Chief Commissioner of Ajmer-Merwara, who was for several years Commissioner of Ajmer-Merwara, in a statement, he submitted to the Ashworth Committee said:—"The conclusion seems irresistible that if Ajmer-Merwara, with the rest of India, is to advance towards the goal of Self Government, it must do so as part and parcel of a larger unit." (p. 29).

The Hon'ble Sir Alexandar Muddiman, Home Member of the Government of India speaking on the 24th February, 1925, said:— (*Legislative Assembly Debates* for 1925, p. 1467) "The Government of India when they first considered how this district might be brought within the scope of the Reforms scheme, proposed that it should be transferred to the United Provinces." *They could think of no other way* This clearly shows that the Government of India think that the only way to give Ajmer-Merwara benefits of the Reforms is to amalgamate it with the United Provinces.

The Indian Statutory Commission too says (Vol. II, p. 107) "The form of Government in Ajmer-Merwara cannot be usefully altered," which means that while Ajmer-Merwara remains a separate unit, its form of Government cannot usefully be altered. The Government of India also says:—"In agreement with the Commission and with the Chief Commissioner we consider that at present no constitutional Reform can suitably be introduced in Ajmer-Merwara."—*Despatch to the Secretary of State on proposals for Constitutional Reform* page 79.

THE ONLY WAY

Thus it is clear that so long as Ajmer-Merwara remains a separate unit, it cannot participate in the Reforms and cannot have responsible Government like the rest of India. It cannot have the benefits of representative government, but must continue to

remain under an autocratic form of government. It is also clear that the only way to share with the rest of India in the benefits of responsible government is amalgamation with a major province.

Now, the United Provinces are the only major province with which, owing to historic tradition, social affinity, religious connections, and present official relations in several departments of administration, Ajmer Merwara can be amalgamated. The conclusion arrived at by the Ashworth Committee was also the same. It said :—"Neither the terms of reference nor the opinions collected by us suggest merger in any other province. The United Provinces, both on geographical and historical grounds, are clearly the only larger province in which it would be fitting to include Ajmer Merwara." (p. 16).

TWO ALTERNATIVES

After taking into consideration the various aspects of the question, I am strongly of opinion that all shades of opinion would be satisfied if Government can find it possible to make Ajmer Merwara an autonomous province enabling its people fully to participate in the benefits of the new constitution and to have the same voice in the administration of their province as the people of the other provinces have in theirs. If, however, that is impossible, then the interests of the people demand that Ajmer Merwara should be amalgamated with the United Provinces. Nothing else will satisfy the people: nothing else will meet their requirements.

CENTRAL REPRESENTATION

I am also of opinion that considering the special position of Ajmer Merwara and its distance from the United Provinces, its historic past, and its long connection with the Government of India, Ajmer

Merwara should also have separate adequate representation in the Central Legislature. This demand is a most reasonable and proper one. No one acquainted with the real character of the Central Legislature and the rights and privileges of the various major and minor provinces of India can take exception to such representation. All major provinces in addition to their local Legislative Councils, enjoy adequate representation in the Central Legislature. The United Provinces have their own Legislative Council and, in addition, return 16 members to the Legislative Assembly and 5 to the Council of State. If the people of the various districts forming the United Provinces have a right jointly to be represented in both the Chambers of the Central Legislature in addition to their Local Council, there can be no possible objection to Ajmer Merwara forming part of the United Provinces, and owing to its especial position, having representation in the Central Legislature.

Moreover, when it is proposed to give Coorg—a much smaller province than Ajmer Merwara—representation in both the Chambers of the Central Legislature in addition to giving it a Legislative Council of its own, it is only just and fair that Ajmer Merwara should enjoy representation in the United Provinces Council as well as the Federal Legislature.

As the accredited representative of the people of Ajmer Merwara, I ask that Ajmer Merwara should be amalgamated with the United Provinces and should also have separate representation in both the Chambers of the Central Legislature.

REFORMS IN AJMER MERWARA[1]

Stand upright, speak thy thought, declare
The truth thou hast, that all may share;
Be bold, proclaim it everywhere;
They only live who dare,—rightly dare.

Sir Lewis Morris.

THE British Government have decided to accept the progressive association of Indians with the Government of India and to enact legislation conferring increasing power on them to manage their own affairs in Municipal and Provincial matters, and thus gradually lead them to attain self-Government under the aegis of the British Throne. The New Government of India Act is intended to set the country on the road to achieve this end. The eyes of the Government and the people are turned towards this goal, and preparations are being made on all sides to reach it without any unnecessary delay. The way, however, is long and weary, and much patience, thought, courage, public spirit and co-operation is necessary to enable the country to travel steadily onwards without faltering and without meeting a set-back. Thus, while the whole of India is pulsating with new life, new hopes and new desires; and while all the surrounding provinces, the United Provinces, the Punjab, and Bombay are leaving the old path for the new, what part is Ajmer-Merawra going to play in the new order of things?

[1] Memorandum submitted in 1921 A. D. to the Committee appointed by the Government of India to report on the Administrative and Judicial arrangements in the Province of Ajmer Merwara, known as the Ashworth Committee.

Under British Rule, Ajmer Merwara is entitled to enjoy, and is desirous of enjoying, the same rights and privileges, the same protection and benefits of that rule as the other provinces of India. Being the heart of Rajputana, the pulsation of life is quicker in Ajmer-Merwara than in the rest of Rajputana; and its social and political life, what with its character as a British Province situated in the midst of Indian States, and what with its important position not only physically but still more from a religious point of view, as the meeting ground of both Hindus and Musalmans, owing to Pushkar and the Durgah Khawaja Sahib, from all parts of India, from distant Madras, Bengal and the Frontier Province, to the United Provinces, Gujrat and Malwa, social and political life here is likely to gather accelerated speed as time goes on. And it would probably be wise as well as expedient not to leave it where it has remained since its acquisition by Government, while the rest of the country is steadily travelling towards a well-defined goal by definite, decisive and carefully determined steps. The interests of peace, contentment and good Government would probably be better served by keeping Ajmer Merwara abreast with other provinces and not with-holding from it advantages and benefits which other provinces would be enjoying as of right.

The question is, can all this be done while Ajmer-Merwara remains a separate entity, cut off administratively from the rest of India?

Its small size and population, and its geographical position preclude the application of those principles and measures of Government which may, and will be, adopted in the case of bigger provinces. It is imposible to create for this small area, the same administrative and governmental machinery and establish institutions and adopt means to provide full scope for the exercise of the growing activities and energies of

the people and to assure the advancement of all educational, commercial, social, economic and political interests of its inhabitants. The financial position of Ajmer Merwara, if it is made to stand by itself, will for ever bar the way of its people getting all the advantages, the other provinces are and would soon be enjoying in a still greater degree, whether political or economical. Ajmer Merwara will never be able to get the same facilities as other provinces in the matter of education whether literary, commercial, technical, legal, medical or agricultural as, for instance, the United Provinces. Its young men will never have the same field for employment and work in these and other departments of administration or spheres of activity as the people of any district in the United Provinces or Bombay. Its judiciary can never be of the same calibre and high status as it would be, if it were a part of the United Provinces, and the administration of justice is the most important function a Government has to discharge in peace times. Leaving the benefits of a Chartered High Court aside, it can hardly ever afford to have even a Judicial Commissioner with the legal knowledge, experience, training and status of a High Court Judge; or even a Chief Commissioner, whose time and energy would be devoted, as they should be devoted, in the absence of a Legislative Council, solely to the administration of this small province, and to a study of the needs of its people and the adoption of measures necessary for their progress to keep them at a level with the people of other provinces.

Its best interests, therefore, demand that it should be incorporated with an advanced province. In my humble opinion, it would not lose its individuality by its association with the United Provinces; for, individuality is a matter not of machinery of administration, but of mental and moral resources of a people, and such

resources, I am apt to think will receive greater development with increased opportunities of education and association. Its advantageous position, it being the centre of arteries carrying life and activity to the different parts of the great and historical province of Rajputana, and also as forming a principal link in the chain which connects life in Northern India with that in the South-Western would never allow it to be submerged under any reactionary and prejudicial forces operating in a province administered from a place so far away from Ajmer as Allahabad or Lucknow; for we must always remember that the telegraph, the railway, the air service and other means of speedy communication have, if not annihilated time and distance, reduced these factors to their minimum importance. In fact, I am of opinion, that while it would enjoy all the advantages and benefits that an advanced and big province must provide for its component parts, the peculiar position of Ajmer Merwara would ensure for it some privileges which would be found specially suited to its requirements.

It appears to me that the United Provinces is the only province with which Ajmer Merwara can, with any advantage be associated. Historic tradition points towards it as an unmistakable aim. Throughout the Musalman period of Indian History, Mughal as well as pre-Mughal, the Subah of Ajmer was more closely associated with the country now styled the United Provinces, which then included Delhi, than with the Punjab. And during its existence of 102 years as British territory from 1818 A. D. to 1920 A. D. Ajmer-Merwara was under the United Provinces Government from 1818 A. D to 1870 A.D.—for more than half the period of such existence. Even now, several departments of its administration, the Forest, the Police and the Public Works are administered by officers on the United Provinces Cadre.

Educationally, Ajmer Merwara is affiliated to the University of Allahabad.[1] The United Provinces High Court is still the Court of Reference for this province. There is greater affinity between Ajmer and the United Provinces than any other British Province in language, habits of the people, in the matter of caste, social customs and manners (even in food and dress)—all matters, that ensure success in administrative amalgamation and thereby in achieving public welfare and advancement.

It is impossible to link this province with the Punjab, for there is absolutely nothing common between the two provinces, except that both are parts of British India. The language, the mode of life, the manners and customs of the people inhabiting Ajmer Merwara differ completely from those of the Punjab. Historical tradition, which is an unerring embodiment of achieved results of past effort, and which is an important factor in the success of any scheme of amalgamation, is completely lacking in this case. History shows that Ajmer Merwara never had anything to do with the Punjab politically or socially during the last thousand years, and more. The mere fact that during the last four or five years, two officers who are on the Punjab cadre have been borrowed to run the co-operative movement in the province, cannot seriously be considered as any ground for tacking Ajmer Merwara on to the Punjab.

Delhi may be called a province only by courtesy, for it consists only of a city, and though administrative convenience and economy may render it desirable to combine Delhi, mainly for Delhi's sake, with Ajmer, yet the public interests of Ajmer Merwara would in no way be advanced by this arrangement. On the contrary, Delhi would be a serious handicap for Ajmer-

[1]Now to the Agra University.

Merwara, and political, social and economic advancement of Ajmer Merwara would be retarded by its close association with Delhi, which city, being the seat of the Imperial Government, demands special treatment.

The presence of Istimrari Estates in Ajmer-Merwara does not affect the question at all. Their relations with the chiefs and chieftains in Rajputana are of a social character and will not be affected by Ajmer Merwara being administered by officers on the United Provinces cadre or a cadre of its own. The special treatment and the privileged position these estates enjoy, will in no way be imperilled by the Estates coming under the jurisdiction of a Local Government, which, as in the case of the Oudh Talukdars, controls estates, many of whom are individually almost equal in revenue to the Ajmer Istimrari Estates combined. Moreover, when their interests were admittedly in no way adversely affected when they, for the first time, came under the control of the United Provinces Government in 1818 A. D. and remained in that position for 50 years, there can be no shadow of an apprehension on that score, now that the position of the Istimrardars is consolidated and their individual rights properly defined and both better understood than at the beginning of the British Rule.

I, therefore, submit that, after a careful consideration of the matter, I am decidedly of opinion that in the interests of the people of Ajmer Merwara, as well as the general interests of the inhabitants of Rajputana, Ajmer Merwara should be amalgamated with the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.



HAR BILAS SARDA, 1899 A D

A LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FOR

AJMER MERWARA[1]

We held debate..........................
........................on mind and art
And labour and the changing mart,
And all the framework of the land.

TENNYSON, *In Memorium.*

SIR, I move that "This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council that he will be pleased to establish a Legislative Council for Ajmer Merwara."

The matter of the motion must not be taken to be of local importance only, as affecting only a small part of the country. The history and traditions of Ajmer-Merwara, its great strategical importance, its peculiar geographical situation—situated as it is in the heart of the land of the Rajputs, and more than 220 miles away from the nearest British territory—and its great religious associations invest the question of its administration with an importance which will be felt more and more as time progresses.

As that noble historian and political officer, Colonel James Tod, whose memory is revered throughout Rajputana, says, Ajmer is celebrated in the history of the Mughals as well as the Hindus. It was the last capital of the Hindu Empire in India. Ajmer was the place where the splendours of Rajput chivalry and the resplendant glories of the Chauhan Empire shone

[1]Speech delivered in the Legislative Assembly, New Delhi, on 24 February, 1925 A. D.

so brightly as to light up the firmament of the whole of Southern Asia.

Even now Ajmer contains one of the most sacred of the Hindu places of pilgrimage as also one of the important Muslim shrines in India. The importance of Ajmer and the part it has played in the political history of the country are best illustrated by the fact that no one achieved political supremacy in this great country, until the possession of Ajmer adorned his ambitious brow.

Ajmer was one of the earliest possessions of the British in India: it became a part of British India long before Delhi, Agra, Lahore, Lucknow, Allahabad, Karachi or Nagpur.

And if any province deserves well of the British Government, it is Ajmer Merwara. For, it was this small province, rather its district of Merwara, which furnished the highest percentage of fighting men in India to the Government during the World War. I remember well the head of the Province declare, with evident pride at a public meeting in Ajmer after a prolonged tour in Merwara in 1916, that he had been to all the villages in the district and had looked in vain for grown-up men in the villages; that he had found that all who were capable of bearing arms were serving their King either in Flanders or in Mesopotamia or Africa, and that only women, children and old men were to be seen in the villages and the hill-sides of this nursery of soldiers.

Ajmer is called the heart of Rajputana. It is here that those vital impulses are generated that reach the furthermost parts of this great province. Being the centre of Rajputana, it radiates light which lights up all the nooks and corners in this historic province and affects the lives not only of the millions who reside there, but of millions who possessing homes there, are spread all over India and are found in large numbers in

Madras, in the Central Provinces and Khandesh, in Sindh and all over the Bombay Presidency, in Hyderabad, in Bengal, in distant Assam, in Rangoon, in Singapore and in Africa. Their happiness and prosperity are affected by the political conditions and administrative changes in the homelands of this race of born traders and business men. These homelands take their cue from this important province of Ajmer-Merwara, which in all matters administrative or social, is looked up to by the rest of Rajputana containing the most important and ancient Rajput States of India. What Ajmer thinks to-day, the rest of Rajputana will think to-morrow.

The form of administration of Ajmer Merwara is thus of importance not only to the citizens of this British Province, but also to all residents of Rajputana, a province as large as France, whether they reside in Rajputana or are engaged in commercial pursuits in other parts in India. In this sense, the question of the administration of Ajmer Merwara travels beyond the limits of provincial importance and enters into the domain of national importance.

But while the situation and the circumstances of this province invest it with especial importance, its small size subjects it to serious drawbacks. In big provinces, the outcry reverberates throughout their length and breadth and even beyond them, and the volume ensures hearing. Then, the income and the extent of territory in the case of bigger provinces make the maintenance of regular and permanent services possible, and make the members of those services take real interest in its problems, its conditions, in its welfare, as most of them have to pass their lives there. Not so in small provinces, and particularly those under the Political Department of the Government of India.

Rightly or wrongly, the British Government have accepted the ideal that the Government of India shall

be a federation of provinces, all self-contained and independent, with only foreign relations, finance and national security centralized. This involves provincialization of services, and the breaking of many of those bonds which serve to unite the various provinces together and to cement the various parts of the country into one whole. Provincial autonomy is a spoke in the wheel of Indian progress. It is a question whether the present policy, if carried to its logical conclusion, in a country like India will not to some extent hinder the building up of the Indian nation as a unit, as an organic unity gathering nourishment from every part of it and supplying vitality to its various component parts by a single alimentary canal reaching its furthest limits. I believe, Sir, that provincialization has been introduced into India, not because it has any virtue in itself, but because Government have conceded control of the services and local interests in provinces to local Councils and Ministers who would be Indians and who would thus be able to exercise some control over the administration.

I believe, Sir, that nationalization of the important and skeleton services would be more useful to the country in keeping up a high standard of efficiency and in strengthening the unifying influences at work in the land. Whether this view is right or wrong, I think it is desirable that a Government, imperial in character, with an imperial outlook, should not shape the administration of each province or district irrespective of attendant considerations, merely on the relation its revenue bears to its expenditure. Certain principles applicable to big provinces cannot with justice or fairness be strictly applied to small but important provinces.

Ajmer Merwara, though in no way behind the bigger provinces in intellectual and moral evolution, is being left behind in the race, through no fault of its

own, but owing to historic incidents, owing to circumstances beyond the control of its inhabitants. Ajmer-Merwara with a history and traditions second in importance to no other province, inhabited by a people who in intelligence, industry, enterprise and loyalty are able to hold their own anywhere, have to live in unsatisfactory conditions, in spite of the efforts of some of the best officers that have served any Government, as the administration is starved and educational facilities to the people denied. If literacy is any test of the fitness of a province to secure representative institutions and a Legislative Council, Ajmer Merwara is far in advance of many a province which possesses a Council. The Punjab and the United Provinces are situated nearer to Ajmer Merwara than any other British province. Now, according to the census of 1921 the average literacy of Ajmer Merwara is 113 compared to 37 in the United Provinces and 25 in the Punjab. The electorate in Ajmer Merwara is thus much better educated, if I may use the word, than in these neighbouring provinces.

Let us apply another test. It has often been said that the fitness of a province to possess a representative Assembly is in proportion to the number of electors that go to the polls. If we apply this test to the various provinces of India, Ajmer Merwara would be found to be the foremost province in India entitled to possess an elected Council; for, at the last Assembly elections, 75 per cent of the voters went to the polls, as compared with 53 in the Punjab and 45 in the United Provinces. No single constituency anywhere in India sent more than 70 per cent or 65 per cent of its voters to the polls. Ajmer Merwara sent 75 per cent.

Leaving aside this view, it may be noted that while the rest of India is making progress towards self-government, there has been hardly any progress in the

administration of Ajmer Merwara. The Province is still a Scheduled District: local laws passed fifty years ago are still in force practically unimproved. The Municipalities Act passed forty years ago stands intact. And whenever a new Regulation is made in any matter, it is framed and passed without the people having any voice in the framing of it.

Now, Sir, a great injustice was done to my province when it was made a Scheduled District. Up to 1870 A.D. it was a part of the North-Western Provinces and was administered by the Lieutenant-Governor of that Province. In 1871 it was taken away from the North-Western Provinces and made a minor administration under the Government of India, and was placed under the Agent to the Governor General in Rajputana as an *ex-officio* Chief Commissioner. The Scheduled Districts Act of 1874 was applied to it in 1877 A.D. This was a great injustice. Sir, the Scheduled Districts Act is intended for very backward tracts of the country. The Honourable Mr. Hobhouse while presenting the Report of the Select Committee on the Scheduled Districts Bill and Laws Local Extent Bill in the Council of the Governor-General of India on 8th December 1874 referred to the power conferred by the Acts on the Executive Government and said :

"In fact it was supposed by some that with regard to certain *outlying* districts which we now call Scheduled Districts, the Local Governments were to have absolute and unlimited powers of altering the law from time to time by proclamation and similar summary process."

He further said :

"Other enactments again known as deregulationising Acts have been passed for the purpose of removing from the operation of the General Acts and Regulations certain districts which were *too backward* to benefit by them and of giving large powers of administration to the Executive in those Districts."

Towards the end of his speech, he again used the

words "except the backward parts called the Scheduled districts."

Sir Courtney Ilbert in his "Government of India" (Chapter 2, page 145) says:

"Besides the formal power of making laws through the Legislative Council, the Governor has also, under an Act of 1870 power to legislate in a more summary manner by meens of Regulations for the government of certain districts of India of a *more backward* character which are defined by orders of the Secretary of State and which are Scheduled districts within the meaning of certain Acts of the Indian Legislature."

These extracts will show that the backward parts of the country, some outlying districts were the tracts intended to be treated as Scheduled districts, and the Scheduled Districts Act was intended to be applied to them only. By no stretch of imagination, no straining of the English language, could Ajmer be called or treated as a backward province, deficient in the possession of the necessary elements of a civilised part of the country; as being inhabited by a people in any way behind Agra, Delhi, Cawnpore, Lahore, Ahmedabad or Poona in the common amenities of civilisation, in social or moral evolution, in the peaceful arts of life or in intellectual culture. Is the fact that Ajmer was once the capital of Upper India under the Chauhan Emperors, or, where the high traditions of its elevated position, courtly manners, high Hindu culture and refinement—concomitants of the seat of empire—still linger, a proof of its backwardness ? Is the fact that it contains the most ancient and sacred places of the Muslims and the Hindus in this country, places of pilgrimage where Hindus and Muslims from all parts of India have for centuries been meeting and bringing with them their high culture and traditions any evidence to show that Ajmer is a semi-civilised province or is it that its flourishing cotton, lace and dyeing industries, its higher average iteracy than that of most of the other provinces of

India, the peaceful pursuits of its residents, the total absence of violent crime in it, make it a backward tract? The answer can only be an emphatic "*no.*" How is it then that it has been classed as a Scheduled district? There is a Persian proverb, Sir, *Ae raushani-e-taba tu bar man balā shudi.* "(Oh enlightenment, thou hast become a source of trouble to me.") Its important strategical and political situation, situated as it is at the head of the watershed of India, and commanding equally all the great Rajput States from its central position has been its misfortune. Government knew well from the beginning that Ajmer was more advanced in the amenities of civilisation than many Regulation Provinces and was abreast of the best of them, yet because of the political considerations that its geographical situation in the midst of great and historic Rajput States gave rise to, it was considered necessary to treat it in a special way. That is why it was made a Non-Regulation province. The Ashworth Committee's report on the Administrative and Judicial arrangements in the province of Ajmer Merwara, 1921, under the heading "Historical Restrospect", after mentioning that in 1853 Ajmer Merwara was administered by the Government of the North Western Provinces through a Commissioner who was assisted by a Deputy Commissioner and an Assistant Commissioner, says:

"From 1858 the office of the Commissioner was held *ex-officio* by the Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana who was subordinate in his former capacity to the Government of the North Western Provinces and in his latter capacity to the Political Department of tho Government of India. This was found to be an undesirable system. The Agent to the Governor General in Rajputana could not spare sufficient time for the constant correspondence which his position as Commissioner under a Local Government entailed, while his subordination as Commissioner to a Local Government was detrimentail to hs influence as Agent with the Indian Princes.

At the same time, the situation of Ajmer-Merwara among Indian States in the heart of Rajputana was held to render necessary the retention of its administration by the Agent to the Governor-General. Accordingly in **1871** A.D. the province was taken under the direct administration of the Government of India *in the Foreign Department, that department being preferred to the Home Department on the ground of the district's geographical position among Indian States* and of its circumstances requiring less rigidity of procedure."

It is thus clear, Sir, that it was not because of the people being backward that it was made a Non-Regulation province, but because this was considered necessary for the furtherance of the foreign policy of the Government of India in its dealings with the Indian Princes. And as the Government of India in the interests of their foreign policy would not allow Ajmer-Merwara to be administered by the Home Department or as a Regulation Province, which it fully deserved and to which it was fully entitled in every sense of the term; and as Government had at their command no other machinery of administration except what was provided by Statute 33 Victoria c. 3; Act I of 1870 was applied to it and it was subjected to all the hardships, the injustices, the disabilities and disqualifications of a Scheduled or a backward province. Sir, my province has thus been suffering from a wrong done to it by Government, though perhaps Government never intended to injure the people by designedly retarding their progress.

But the times have changed, the goal of British policy in India has changed, old methods have been discarded and new ones adopted, and the interests of my province, imperatively demand that to save it from permanent injury, it should be given the benefit of the measures which the Government in their wisdom have considered it necessary to apply to the rest of India to ensure the progress and happiness of its people. *(Pandit Shamlal Nehru*: "What are the benefits that the rest

of India enjoys?") Why, the application of the Reform Scheme, the increasing association of the people with the administration and with the Government. The latest authoritative report on the administration of Ajmer shows how great the need for a reformed administration there is in Ajmer Merwara. At page 10, it says that "there is urgent need of the revision of the Ajmer Merwara Regulations." Furtheron (page 12) it says: "While, *we agree that the administration as it exists is amateurish*, we are impressed with grave deficiencies which exist." Is there not a sufficiently strong case for us to ask Government to undo the wrong done to us, however unwittingly and unintentionally, and associate us in the administration, and frame laws and regulations with the willing co-operation and loyal assistance of the people in a Legislative Council and thereby ensure the advancement, the happiness and contentment of the people, who have proved their loyalty, and who stand abreast of the most advanced and enlightened of the provinces of India in intellectual and moral evolution?

Government received possession of Ajmer in 1818 A.D. from the Scindia. Since then, great improvements have been made. While the Mughal Empire was declining and dissolving, the possession of Ajmer, owing to its central position, was coveted by the different warring elements in the country; and it became a bone of contention in the eighteenth century between the Mughals and the Rajputs, and later between the Rajputs and the Mahrattas. The population of Ajmer in 1818 sank to 25,000 men all told. With the era of peace and settled government ushered in by the British, the population began to increase, till it is now a lakh. Beawar, which, a hundred years ago, was a

[1]Ashworth Committee Report.
[2]According to the 1931 Census Report, it is 1,19,524.

village, has now become one of the most important commercial centres of India, with a rising cotton industry of considerable importance and a wool trade second only to that of Fazalka in the Punjab. The district of Merwara, inhabited by a people who in olden days preferred the sword and the rapier to the plough, has been made an agricultural district and a centre of industry. Its daring people who enjoyed virtual independence till 1820 A.D.; who plundered the camp of Emperor Jahangir and did not allow Emperor Aurangzeb and even Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh of Jaipur to pass unmolested by it, have been converted into agriculturists, industrialists and soldiers. But while acknowledging the good done to Ajmer Merwara in the past, it is our duty to see that the people of that province who have stood fast by the Government and shed their blood freely on the battle-fields of Flanders and Mesopotamia are enabled to march with the times and keep abreast of the other provinces and not left behind them.

In Ajmer Merwara, the European civil officers belong to the Political Department of the Government of India, and though some of them are masters of their craft and are sympathetic, they are handicapped in various ways. The fact is that most of those who come to the province have little experience of administration. As Mr. L. W. Reynolds, recently Commissioner of Ajmer-Merwara, says (*vide*, page 29 of the Asworth Committee's Report).

"Under the existing system there is no certainty that either the Chief Commissioner or his First Assistant (now Secretary) will have any administrative experience of Ajmer Merwara or indeed any administrative experience at all, the appointment being made from the cadre of the Political Department which is composed of officers, many of whom have never served in "Internal India." Similar criticism applies to the Commissioner. Some Commissioners have had revenue knowledge, some judicial, most of them have had neither, and in only one instance, during the last fifteen years has the incumbent of the office had, prior

to his appointment, any recent experience of district work."

These are the words of Mr. Reynolds, Chief Commissioner of Ajmer-Merwara). (later, Sir L. W. Reynolds, Regarding the work of the Commissioner, he says:—

"The Commissioner, in addition to being Sessions and Civil Judge and District Magistrate, a combination of duties which in the present day it will, I think, be found hard to defend, is Director General of Education, Inspector General of Jails, Inspector General of Forests, Chairman of the District Board, Convener of the Managing Committee of the Mayo College, Registrar-General of Births and Deaths in Rajputana."

Mr. Reynolds forgot to add, Collector of Revenue and Inspector General of Registration. He adds:

"In addition, he has general supervision over Excise, Income-tax, Co-operative Societies and the ordinary duties of district, municipal and revenue work. Though practically the final arbiter on these special branches he is as a rule entirely innocent of any knowledge of education, forests, co-operative societies, excise and such matters. Common sense is his only and not always a safe guide in matters requiring technical knowledge and experience."

The seriousness of the drawback increases with the development of the administrative machinery of British India, the changing of the goal of British policy and the awakening of the people to a consciousness of their position and their rights. The acquaintance of these officers with the conditions and circumstances of the province is meagre and superficial and their interest in its welfare, in spite of their goodwill, of a fleeting nature owing to the fact that there is no permanent bond between them and the province, as is the case in bigger provinces. The Commissioner of Ajmer is to-day in Ajmer and to-morrow he is Resident of Kashmir. Owing to these conditions, in all matters executive and judicial, rules and regulations framed by other Provincial Councils and Governments to suit their own requirements are applied to this Province.

I know that the officers there are doing their best according to their lights, but the conditions of service are such that it is impossible for them to do all that should be done.

If, however, there were a Council, the representatives of the people in view of the chronic famine conditions obtaining there, necessitating periodic adjustment in certain matters, and in view of the especial requirements of the province owing to its peculiar geographical and political situation, would not apply the Rules and Regulations framed for other provinces in their entirety, without material modifications.

It is unnecessary for me to take all the Regulations and Acts applied to Ajmer Merwara from time to time—Regulations which were framed for the North-West Frontier Province, the Punjab and other Provinces and which were applied to Ajmer-Merwara without carefully considering whether they were good for Ajmer Merwara.

It will perhaps be said that there is no desire whatever to withhold the benefits of a Legislative Council from Ajmer-Merwara and that the Government wish to give the same voice and the same status to the people there as to those of the United Provinces or the Punjab, but that its financial resources do not allow of the application of the scheme. This objection, when examined in the light of justice and fair-play, would not be found to be tenable. In the first place, the province is really self-supporting. It is not now a deficit province. According to the Inchcape Committee's Report, of the ten minor administrations, Ajmer Merwara is the only surplus one. It is, however, said that if certain Public Works Department charges are included, the expenditure would slightly exceed the income. We think, Sir, that some of these charges are not

properly chargeable to Ajmer. Moreover, the Public Works administration of Ajmer Merwara is unjustifiably top-heavy. There is only one Executive Engineer in the province and over him there is a Superintending Engineer.[1] So is the case with the Police; there is a single District Superintendent of Police and over him there is an Inspector General of Police.[2] Surely there is ample room for reduction of expenditure.

Leaving the question of top-heavy administration aside, is it any fault of the people of Ajmer-Merwara that the province is a small one? The Government took possession of it, bacause of its supreme political importance. The Mughals and the Afghans did the same before the British and for the same reason. But in the Mughal times, the people of Ajmer enjoyed the same rights as those of Allahabad or Agra Are we, who are equally advanced with the people of other provinces in the peaceful arts of life and in intellectul culture, not entitled to the same rights and privileges in provincial matters, as those around us are? Once the Government take possession of any part of India, they by the very act of taking possession, undertake certain liabilities and duties and one of them is that its people become entitle to enjoy the same rights and privileges as people in the same stage of social and moral evolution in other provinces do. Why are we, then, though equally the subjects of His Majesty with those of the United Provinces or Madras, and perhaps more serviceable in war, not to have the same voice in the administration as they have?

As the Government of India pay immense regard to precedent—witness their judicial aminiistration; for, in a court of law a previous ruling is generally decisive—

[1] The post of the Superintending Engineer has since been abolished.
[2] The Retrenchment Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1931 A. D. recommended the abolition of this post.

I will quote a precedent in support of my case.

Government have given a Legislative Council to a province much smaller and infinitely less important than Ajmer-Merwara. It is Coorg. The area of Coorg is about half of that of Ajmer Merwara, while its population is only a little over a third. Coorg has not one town worth the name. Mercara with a population of 5,675 souls standing on the border line between a town and a large village: while my province contains the city of Ajmer with a population of a lakh (the last census report says 114,000) and occupying a most important place in the hearts of the Hindus and the Muslims, for no other city in India, so far as I am aware, enjoys the surname *Sharif* (great)—not even Delhi, not even Simla.

Besides Ajmer, there is the town of Beawar, which is not only one of the most important commercial towns in the country but the second greatest market for wool in the whole of India. There are other towns too with a larger population than the chief town of Coorg. Ajmer is an older possession of the British than Coorg. There is not a single college in Coorg and only one high school. In Ajmer there is a first grade Government College, one of the oldest in Upper India and one of the most efficient, thanks to the life-long labours of the late Principal, Mr. E. F. Harris, to whom Ajmer owes a debt of gratitude. The beginnings of English education in Ajmer-Merwara carry us to the early thirties of the last century. Then there, is the Mayo College, the premier College for the Princes of India. The city of Ajmer alone has a number of large high schools and even those are too few for the boys seeking education. Ajmer is a Bishopric, and contains several European schools. If then, Coorg has been given a Legislative Council to enable the people to participate

in its administration, what valid reason is there that Ajmer Merwara should not have one?

I wish to add, Sir, that if Ajmer Merwara had not been a Non-Regulation province, not a Scheduled District, but had been administered by the Government of India with the Legislative Assembly, the case would have been somewhat different.

His Excellency the Viceroy has often given very wholesome and useful advice to the Indian Princes asking them to recognize the spirit of the times and to associate their people in the administration of Indian States. Nothing will make this advice more effective than the establishment of a Legislative Council in the heart of Rajputana as an example for them to follow, and an act for them to emulate.

I appeal to Government therefore to consider our request, to consider the priceless services rendered by Ajmer Merwara in the great war, to consider its present unique and important position, to consider its high development in the peaceful arts of life, to consider its past history and the glories it is heir to, and to consider the far-reaching beneficent consequences that the progress and advancement of Ajmer Merwara in representative government would have on the lives and happiness of the millions that inhabit Rajputana and are engaged in trade and industry, and are abreast of the people of the most advanced provinces in India in culture and civilization, and extend the benefits of a Legislative Council to Ajmer Merwara, which justice demands and policy sanctions.

A UNIVERSITY FOR RAJPUTANA[1]

Blest be the gracious Power, who taught mankind
To stamp a lasting image of the mind!
Beasts may convey, and tuneful birds may sing,
Their mutual feelings in the opening spring;
But Man alone has skill and power to send
The heart's warm dictates to the distant friend;
'Tis his alone to please, instruct, advice
Ages remote, and nations yet to rise.

CRABBE.

AJMER enjoys a distinction of its own amongst the cities of India. Not only was it the last Capital of the Hindu Empire, but it is proudly and inseparably associated with the glories of Rajput chivalry, having been the capital of the most famous of the Rajput sovereigns of the country, the Emperors Pirthviraj and Visaldeva. Geographically, it marks the head of the water-shed of India, the plateau on which it stands being the highest elevation of the plains of Hindustan. It is admittedly one of the most picturesque places in India. Its superb situation, the great strategical importance of its position in the centre of the warlike Rajput States, and crowned, as it is, by the impregnable fortress of *Gurh Beetli* (Taragarh), famous in song, which, according to Bishop Herber, ' might easily be made a second Gibralter," have given Ajmer a unique position amongst the cities of India and have made it a living illustration of what human genius aided by Nature can achieve.

[1] Reprinted from the *Ajmer Government College Magazine* for November, 1928 A.D.

Colonel James Tod, the father of Rajput hstory, whose knowledge of the history, traditions and the character of the people of Rajputana has never been equalled, calls Ajmer, "the heart of Rajputana." As the vital impulses that take their origin in this favoured spot travel to the farthest corners of this land of chivalry; so do education and enlightenment radiate from this centre to illumine this province, which is as large as that great country which gave to the world the trinity of human emancipation, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."

It was, therefore, in the fitness of things that the first public school to impart education on Western lines in Western India was opened at Ajmer. It was in 1836 A. D. while the Punjab was still under Hindu rule and Oudh under the Muslims; before Sir Charles Napier had won the battles of Miani and Hyderabad, which later in 1843 made Sindh a British province; while Nagpur still had its Bhonsla king, and a degenerate descendant of the mighty Akbar occupied the throne at Delhi, that an English school was opened at Ajmer. A few years later, in 1847, the Court of Directors of the East India Company established a regular High school, which has since developed into a first grade College, the present Government College at Ajmer. Ever since its inception, the institution has been spreading enlightenment in Rajputana, and its *alumni* have carried the lamp of learning to the various States which surround Ajmer, and have furnished men to strengthen and carry on the administration of these remnants of ancient Hindu sovereignty. The Government College has furnished the various Indian States in Rajputana with Ministers and Diwans who have systematized the administrations of those States and introduced in them many enlightened principles. Though the Ajmer Government College has done valuable work in



HAR BILAS SARDA, 1886 A D.

Rajputana, which does it credit, and which entitles it to the gratitude of the people, its development into a university has, for the time being, been arrested. The coping-stone on the magnificient edifice which was begun in 1847 and has been reared by loyal and loving hands has yet to be placed.

Many of the Colleges that came into being long after our College had become an Intermediate College, have developed into universities. The Ajmer College has yet to become a university. The attempt lately made, by the well-wishers of education in Rajputana, did not come to fruition, owing to reasons which must be removed, and which, being against the spirit of the times we are passing through, cannot long hold the field. The establishment of a University is desirable, not because it enables us to stamp on the spot the product of that mine, not even because it applies the fiery test of examinations to sort the genuine from the spurious; not because it provides, within easy reach facilities for higher education; but chiefly because it creates an atmosphere congenial to the development of the human mind.

By bringing together and centralising different departments of learning; by the convergence in close, mutual association of various sources and agencies of teaching, a new spirit is produced, which liberalizes the mind, broadens the vision, widens the sympathies, and elevates the general level of character. The university becomes a centre of activity, wherein will come to birth intellectual and moral forces, which not only have a great unifying effect, uniting by culture and moral ties the whole of the area served by the university, but which infuse new spirit in the dead bones of social life to vitalise and enliven it, and generally promote research and reform in the entire domain of society, religion and economics, freeing them from the cobwebs of ages and destroying the

ancient shibboleths of ante-deluvian times, substituting in their place, principles and precepts in harmony with modern thought and requirements, calculated to help in the ushering in of an era of general progress and welfare.

This is a desideratum not only generally desirable but one which has become inevitable. Its advent can be delayed, but not prevented. It is sure to confer great benefits on the province. The university should be cast in a mould, so that the high principles of true Western teaching which lay stress on the formation of character and inculcation of moral principles, could coalesce with the tenets of "Swadharma," the basic principle on which the traditions of Rajputana rest. The institution then will produce youngmen devoted to duty, alive to obligations, and sensitive to the dictates of honour.

And it is inevitable. India being one whole, no part of it, and especially such an important part as Rajputana,—covered as it is, with the glory of great deeds and associated with traditions that have won universal praise, approbation and admiration—can long be held back from taking part in the general movement onwards.

And it behoves all those who have had the privilege of receiving education in this seat of learning, or have been in any way connected with it, at one time or another, to do their duty to their *Alma Mater*, and help in bringing about conditions which are conducive to the fullest development of this institution. The time will come, and come perhaps earlier than many people think, when this desire of all, who love Rajputana, will be fulfilled.

PRIMARY EDUCATION IN AJMER-MERWARA[1]

'Tis education forms the common mind:
Just as the twig is bent, the tree 's inclined.

POPE, *Moral Essays.*

A CAREFUL consideration of the facts brought to light during the investigation clearly shows that neither the Government, nor the local bodies have done their duty fully by the people of Ajmer Merwara in the matter of primary education. While in the major provinces, education being a transferred subject has received more or less adequate consideration and support at the hands of Ministers; while, even in Delhi, which like Ajmer Merwara is a centrally administered area, a great deal has been done in the cause of primary education; in this unhappy province of Ajmer Merwara neither the Government nor the local bodies have taken any appreciable interest in primary education and shown that they are alive to their responsibilities in the matter.

Both Delhi and Ajmer Merwara are Chief Commissionerships under the direct administration of the Government of India with populations almost equal, Delhi having a population of 488,188 and Ajmer 495271 souls, according to the census of 1921 A. D.; but in the matter of primary as well as secondary and college education, Delhi is far ahead of Ajmer. Taking the year 1926-27 A. D., for which figures are available, we find that in Ajmer there was one school for every 18 square miles, while in Delhi there was one for 4 miles.

[1]Minute attached to the Report of the Primary Education Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1930 A. D.

Owing to the introduction of compulsion, however, in the Delhi province, primary schools have since multiplied, and the proportion now is far higher than in 1926-27 A. D. In 1928-29 A. D. the latest year for which figures are available, in Delhi 65·4 per cent of the boys of school-going age attended school, while in Ajmer Merwara only 27·9 per cent did so. As for girls, while in Delhi 23·3 per cent of the girls of school-going age attended school, in Ajmer only 7·3 per cent. did so. The quinquennial report on education in Ajmer Merwara (A. D, 1922 to 1927) says (page 42): "Out of a total female population of 2,25,705 in Ajmer Merwara only 1,395 girls are under instruction, giving a percentage of 0·62"! The percentage even of the male population receiving primary education, according to the Hartog Committee Report issued in 1929, is 3·9 only. Then the rate of progress in Delhi is far more rapid. Enrolment, of boys in the municipal schools of the city of Delhi went up six times, from 1,468 in 1922-23 to 8,549 in 1928-29, and of girls from 336 in 1922-23 to 2,214 in 1928-29. In Ajmer, however, the total number of boys in all schools rose from 6,610 in 1922-23 to 10,524 in 1928-29. As for girls' education, the progress may be measured by the fact that the number of primary schools for girls *decreased from 12 in 1921-22 to 7 in 1926-27*, and, as the quinquennial report (pages 42 and 44) says, the expenditure on those schools went down from Rs. 10,595 in 1921-22 to Rs 6,909 in 1926-27 A. D. Even in the North-West Frontier Province, 30 per cent of the girls of school-going age attend school in urban areas.

Whether this "deplorable state of affairs", to use the words of the quinquennial report, is due to the fact that Ajmer Merwara has no contact with the Central Government like Delhi, where the Government of India stays for half the year, or whether because the

Educational Commissioner with the Government of India, as ex-officio Superintendent of Education of Delhi and Ajmer Merwara, has his headquarters in Delhi and is able personally to watch the progress of education in Delhi, while the unfortunate province of Ajmer Merwara for the last several years has had eagerly to wait for an occasional, almost furtive, visit of the Superintendent of Education, always hoping against hope that he would at least give a little of his precious time to the many educational problems of the province and gain a little personal acquaintance with the actual working of its educational department, whatever the reason, Ajmer Merwara has suffered grievously in the matter of education

Even the quinquennial report condemns in unequivocal terms the system of educational administration of Ajmer Merwara After describing its vital defects, the report says: " A system with the above accumulation of defects is not, and clearly can not be, in the interest of educational administration in Ajmer-Merwara."

Since the retirement in 1921 A. D. of Mr. E. F. Harris, the last resident educational officer in charge in Ajmer Merwara, who devoted all his time and energies to the cause of education in this province and to whom it is beholden for such stable educational conditions as it possesses and what little progress it has been allowed to make in education, its educational problems and needs have not received adequate attention from either the Government of India or the higher educational authorities. Long has it looked with anxious, expectant, yearning eyes to the Government of India for proper attention to its educational needs; often has it appealed to Government to consider the requirements of the province. But the Government of India, while happily not so unresponsive to the calls for assistance of the other

two provinces under its direct control, has given little help to Ajmer Merwara.

The first necessity of the province, if its educational needs are to receive adequate attention, is that the head of its education department must be an officer not only imbued with true educational ideals but *resident* in the province, to remain in direct and personal touch with the working of the department and able to direct each important step that the department has to take. He must be able to direct and control the working of the primary, secondary and college education in the province, not from a distance but from the *centre* of these activities. Barely one per cent of the girls of the school-going age attend school in the rural areas of the province, so that the entire edifice of women's education, practically non-existent now, has to be built up. The appointment of a whole-time Superintendent of Education for Ajmer Merwara is, therefore, a *sine qua non* if any progress in education is to be made in this province, and the province is to be pulled up to somewhere near the level of other provinces.

The recommendation of the committee that a single officer be appointed as Superintendent of Education both for Ajmer and Delhi, and failing that, a separate Superintendent of Education be appointed for Ajmer Merwara is halting, inadequate and, unsound This recommendation is, I believe, due chiefly to the solicitude of the Committee to demand for Ajmer Merwara as little financial help from Government as possible.

The condition of things in Ajmer Merwara is so different from that in Delhi, the educational problems of the one province differ so materially from those of the other, that it is a mistake to put the educational administration of the two provinces in the hands of a single officer. The committee have themselves acknowledged the extreme difficulty of the task. Giving

its reasons for writing separate reports for Delhi and Ajmer Merwara and the North-West Frontier Province, the Committee say (paragraph 6):—"It was extremely difficult, if not actually impossible, to write a review of existing conditions and to make recommendations which would be equally applicable to areas *so widely different* from one another."

The most important witnesses who gave evidence before the Committee in Ajmer regarding the educational needs of Ajmer Merwara, Mr. E. C. Gibson, Commissioner, and Mr. P. B. Joshi, Assistant Superintendent of Education, Ajmer Merwara—both advocated the appointment of a separate Superintendent of Education for Ajmer Merwara. Mr. Joshi, in his written replies to the questionnaire issued by the Committee, answering question 5 detailing the forces that have tended to prevent the extension of primary education in rural areas in Ajmer Merwara gave the first place to "want of a whole-time Directorate and of an independent educational policy worked out to suit local conditions and requirements."

Mr. E. C. Gibson, who is well acquainted with the educational requirements of the province, strongly advocated the appointment of a separate whole-time Superintendent of Education for Ajmer Merwara. In his oral evidence, he said:

"It would be advantageous if there were a whole-time Superintendent of Education for Ajmer Merwara under the Chief Commissioner. There would be plenty of work for a whole time officer to do in directing and extending educational activities, especially if Government decides that the work of accelerating the process of expansion of primary education should be taken up in earnest. There is still greater scope for extending and developing female education in the district."

And now that the Committee have strongly recommended that the expansion of primary education should be taken up in earnest and have recommended

the introduction of compulsion; and, as the entire fabric of female education has yet to be raised, the province cannot do without a whole-time Superintendent of Education.

When this important question was raised in the Assembly, the reply of Government, if my memory does not fail me, was that the matter would receive due consideration on the receipt of the report of the Primary Education Committee. But it is a pity that before the report of the Primary Education Committee has been written, even before the Committee concluded its deliberations, Government have, without waiting to consider the requirements of the province as shewn by the evidence tendered before the Primary Education Committee, decided to appoint a single officer as Superintendent of Education for Delhi, Ajmer Merwara and Central India and sought and obtained the agreement of the Standing Finance Committee of the Legislative Assembly to its proposal. May it yet be hoped that the Government of India would, in the light of the facts disclosed by the evidence of witnesses examined by the committee give due consideration to the extreme desirability, nay the necessity, of appointing a whole-time Superintendent of Education for Ajmer Merwara?

Considering the very limited financial resources of the province of Ajmer Merwara, the Government of India should give adequate financial assistance to the province to enable it to come into line with the provinces of Delhi and Agra. The small grants given to Ajmer Merwara by Government, when compared with those given to Delhi, show how little attention Government have paid to Ajmer Merwara as compared with Delhi. Taking the case of Delhi and Ajmer, we find that they are both small provinces containing an almost equal number of boys and girls of the school-going age, about 64,441 in Delhi and 65,376 in

Ajmer Merwara. But the total expenditure incurred by Government and the local bodies in 1928-29 A. D. on primary education in Delhi was Rs. 3,60,868, while in Ajmer the amount (including that on an European school) was barely Rs. 1,38,181. Out of these amounts, the Government expenditure on Ajmer Merwara was only Rs. 57,828, while in Delhi, calculating at 75 per cent contribution by Government to the Delhi District Board and 66 per cent to the Delhi Municipal Committees, as brought out in evidence before the Committee, Government's contribution comes to Rs. 2,56,949—*Rs. 57,828 in Ajmer against Rs. 2,56,949 in Delhi.* The generous way in which Government assists local bodies in Delhi is proved by the fact that while the Delhi District Board's own annual income was Rs. 90,000, Government gave it an annual grant of Rs. 1,60,000 (*vide* Kishenlal's evidence).

The case of Ajmer Merwara for compulsion in primary education is overwhelming. For one thing, Ajmer Merwara, which in point of literacy stood second amongst the various provinces of India in 1921 A. D., is now losing ground day by day; and while the rest of India is forging ahead in the matter of education, Ajmer Merwara, owing to the neglect of primary education in it, is sadly lagging behind. The next Census report will prove this in a convincing manner.

Leaving aside the North-West Frontier Province, where conditions may be said to differ materially from the rest of India, compulsory primary education has been introduced in every province of British India except Ajmer Merwara. Even in Delhi, which like Ajmer Merwara is a centrally administered area compulsion was introduced in 1926-27, and by the end of 1929-30 A. D. the whole of the city of Delhi came under it. Even in the rural areas of the province of Delhi, compulsion has been sanctioned for 10 villages, and has been fully introduced in some of them. Now,

in the amenities of civilised life, in general culture and in the matter of peaceful and progressive social life, Ajmer is in no way behind Delhi; and there is no reason why, if Government had done its duty by this province, compulsory primary education should not have been introduced in Ajmer Merwara along with Delhi. Not only does public opinion demand it, but the peculiar conditions of Ajmer Merwara make its introduction a matter of necessity for its welfare. The Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture lays special stress on the spread of primary education in Ajmer Merwara. It states (page 659) that "Ajmer-Merwara, in consideration of its long history of famines should, in our view, receive special consideration and might well be a model to the States of Rajputana."

Showing the connection between education and economic welfare, the Report says (page 514) "*Without a satisfactory all-round advance in primary education, there can be little hope of any widespread economic progress.*" And again (page 560) "We are persuaded that the only hope of substantial progress lies in the mobilisation of all the available forces, both public and private, in a determined attack upon illiteracy." Commenting on the duty of the local bodies in the matter of education, the Report says (pages 523–524).

"It is therefore, essential to convince local bodies that a bolder policy is needed, if primary education as a vital factor in rural development is to be efficient and widespread, and that the heavy responsibility lies on them of making the rural communities realise that nothing hinders their moral and material well-being, so much as delay or reluctance in bringing primary education within the borders of their villages. It is needless to point out that nothing does more to promote and facilitate the co-operative movement in all directions than primary education."

The Royal Commission on Agriculture fully realised that progress in Educational and other matters in

Ajmer Merwara and other minor Administrations depended entirely upon the help the Government of India gave them, not only because they were under the direct administration of the Government of India, but also because the slender resources of these Administrations made it impossible for them to discharge their duties to the people of those provinces without substantial monetary help from the Government of India. The Report of the Royal Commission says (p. 662):

"We trust that no effort will be spared by the Government of India to remove the reproach that, because of their insignificance, the claims of these small units to share in the benefits of the general advance which is being made, not only in agricultural science but in all matters affecting rural welfare, have not received a due measure of attention. In order that agricultural progress in the minor provinces may be on sound lines, it is, in our opinion, essential that increased attention should be paid to the development of education and co-operation."

The conclusion which the Royal Commission on Agriculture arrived at, after an exhaustive survey of the conditions in the country and which has especial significance for Ajmer Merwara, is thus set forth by it:

"The only remedy for the unsatisfactory state of primary education in India is the introduction of the *compulsory system*" (paragraph 445, page 561), and that "compulsion should be introduced *as rapidly as* local conditions permit" (paragraph 445, page 561). The Report adds:

"We are convinced that the progressive adoption of the compulsory system is the only means by which may be overcome the unwillingness of parents to send their children to school and to keep them there till literacy is attained" (page 523).

The officer in charge of the Education Department in Ajmer is clearly of opinion that in order to make

any progress in Ajmer Merwara now, compulsion should be introduced in the cities. Answering question No. 5 of the questionnaire, the Assistant Superintendent of Education said: "In urban areas primary education seems to have reached the *limit* under the voluntary system. Those who can afford to send their children to school do so and primary schools appear to be full." In answer to question 6, he said: "I think extension in cities should now be on a compulsory basis. Poor people in urban areas will take to primary education only under compulsion." Mr. E. C, Gibson, the Commissioner of Ajmer, in his examination, stated: "I think there is need for making a start in *compulsion in the towns*."

I am therefore strongly of opinion that no time should be lost in introducing compulsory Primary education in Ajmer, Beawar, Kekri, Nasirabad and Pushkar, and that it should be extended, in the near future, to the villages.

In paragraph 12 of the Report (Supervision and Inspection of Schools), the Committee has only recommended that a full-time inspectress of schools to supervise girls' education in Ajmer Merwara should be appointed and that the officer to be appointed should be of the standing of an officer of the Indian Educational service (women's branch). Considering however, that practically nothing has so far been done in the matter of girls' education in Ajmer Merwara, that only 0.62 per cent of the female population of Ajmer Merwara is at present receiving education, I am strongly of opinion that if any real progress in girls' education is to be made, the appointment of an assistant or deputy inspectress of schools, to organise and look after the girls' education in rural areas, in addition to an Inspectress of schools, is absolutely necessary.

Girls' education in Ajmer Merwara is in a deplorable state as admitted in the Quinquennial Report

on Ajmer Merwara. As stated in paragraph 14 of this report, only 1 per cent of the girls of the school-going age in rural areas attend school. Such a state of affairs exists in no province in India, and if any progress in agriculture or any other matter is to be achieved, it is absolutely necessary to pay special attention to the spread of girls' education in rural areas in Ajmer Merwara. A deputy Inspectress of schools to work in rural areas leaving the Inspectress to devote herself mainly to administrative matters and to education in the urban areas should be appointed. An officer of the standing of an officer of the Indian Educational Service with multifarious duties in the towns will hardly be able by herself to organise or give proper attention to the education of girls in the villages.

As regards the medical inspection of students (paragraph 36) I am of opinion that the medical examination of children should be introduced without delay. In Delhi, medical inspection is in full sway and there is absolutely no reason why it should not be introduced with equal benefit at once in Ajmer, Beawar and other towns in this province. Considering the lack of proper sanitary arrangements in Ajmer and Beawar, as evidenced by the continued abnormal deathrate in these towns and the prevalence of tuberculosis therein, it is of especial importance to introduce medical inspection of boys and girls in the towns of Ajmer Merwara without delay.

NEGLECT OF GIRL'S EDUCATION[1]

Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;

GRAY, *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard.*

SIR, I rise to support the Resolution moved by my Honourable friend Revd. J. C. Chatterji. The education of girls is no less important than the education of boys, and in certain areas, considering the condition of things I think it is comparatively more important. A college for the education of girls with a suitable curriculum is a very desirable thing; and to begin with, one such college should be established in a central place. But what is of far greater importance is that schools for training women teachers should be established in each of the areas under the direct administration of the Government of India.

My province of Ajmer Merwara is under the direct administration of the Government of India, and we have therefore to look to this Government for the necessary facilities.

We are a small province and, according to the last Census report of 1921, though in point of literacy, we were in the forefront amongst the provinces of India, in the matter of girls' education we are very backward; and were it not for the interest taken by non-Government agencies—by private bodies and individuals in the matter of girls' education, we

[1] Speech delivered on 18, September, 1928 A D. in the Legislative Assembly, Simla on Mr. J. C. Chatterji's Resolution on "Education of Girls and Women in the Territories administered by the Central Government."

should have been nowhere. *There is only one Government school for secondary education in the whole of my province against nine private ones; only six Government primary schools against 15 non-Government ones*; and there is not one Government training school for women teachers, though there is one such private institution at Ajmer! Thus, there are altogether *only seven Government schools* for primary and secondary Education in the whole of the province, *against 25 Non-Government ones.* As for the number of girl pupils, out of 56,935 girls of school-going age in my province, only 2,033 are at present receiving education; that is to say, 2·3 per cent. And if we take the entire women population of the province, 2,25,705; only ·9 per cent, receive education; that is to say, not even 1 per cent. This deplorably low percentage is due to the neglect of girls' education on the part of Government. If we exclude the girls receiving education in Non-Government institutions, we find that only 228 girls in the whole of the province are receiving education in Government institutions, that is to say, only ·4 per cent. of girls of school-going age of my province.

If we consider the Government expenditure on education, we find that on secondary and primary education for girls, Government spends only Rs. 20,608 per annum, against Rs. 74,687 spent by private individuals and institutions. Compared with the expenditure on boys' education, which in itself is very small in my province, this comes to only 9 per cent of that on boys' education. Taking the entire population of Ajmer Merwara, we find that Government spends only eight pies per head every year on girls' education!

I would therefore earnestly invite the attention of Government to this state of affairs and request that an earnest effort should be made to put a stop to this deplorable condition of things. Government should

establish secondary schools for girls in all the towns of Ajmer Merwara, and there are only five towns in my province. The first necessity, however, in my province is an up-to-date training school for women teachers.

Sir, Ajmer Merwara is cut off from the rest of British India. The nearest British province to Ajmer-Merwara is more than 200 miles away from it. Considering this and the difference in language, manners, customs and conditions of society generally, it is not very easy for people of Ajmer Merwara to send girls and young women far away from the province to receive education or training as women teachers. If a good suitable school for training women teachers is established in Ajmer Merwara, the surrounding States of Rajputana will also be able to send women there to be trained as teachers and will gladly contribute towards the maintenance of such an institution. That would be a great financial support to the Training School.

I would, therefore, urge, and hope and trust that Government will lose no time in establishing a good up-to-date training school for women teachers at Ajmer, as also secondary schools for girls in all the towns of Ajmer Merwara, and good primary schools for them in all the important villages.

ABNORMAL DEATH RATE IN AJMER AND BEAWAR[1]

> How long shall disease claim:its heavy toll
> Without awakening the feeting soul.
>
> P. SESHADRI.

THE town of Beawar is the chief centre of trade in Rajputana, and is famous for cotton and wool industry. It is the second greatest wool mart in India, Fazilka in the Punjab being the first. Beawar is the chief distributing centre for cloth, yarn, sugar, gur, ghee and other things for the eastern parts of Marwar and a very large part of Mewar. It contains three Spinning and Weaving Cotton Mills, which employ about 3,500 men and women, and has several cotton pressing and ginning factories.

Beawar, or Nayanagar as it was originally named, and by which name it is still popularly known, is a modern town. It was founded 93 years ago, in 1835 A. D., by Colonel Dixon who was Superintendent of Merwara from 1836 to 1842 A. D., and Commissioner of Ajmer Merwara from 1842 to 1857 A. D. Founded principally for stratagical reasons—to bring under control the Mers whose turbulence and lawlessness during the last six centuries is a matter of history, as well as to keep the Bhils of the hilly tracts of Mewar under control—its geographical position on the border

[1] Introduction to Rai Sahib Vyas Tanaukh's *Abnormal Death Rate in Beawar*, 1930 A.D.

separating Mewar, Marwar and Ajmer, eminently fitted it to become a commercial town for distribution of merchandise both to Mewar and Marwar. Its salubrious climate and the settled conditions of life which followed the British occupation of Ajmer in 1818 A. D., materially helped the growth of the town of Beawar. Its population, which in 1847 A. D. was 9,000, rose to 12,308 in 1876 and 15,829 in 1881 A.D. Thereafter, there was a rapid increase, till in 1891 A.D. it rose to 20,978. Upto 1891 A.D., the growth of the population was satisfactory. After 1891 A. D., however, the growth has not been appreciable, though industry and business have increased in the town. The population of Beawar was 21,928 in 1901 A. D. showing an increase of only 950 in 10 years as compared with an increase of 5,149 during the preceding decade (1881 to 1891).

The Census Report of 1911 A. D. gives the population of Beawar as 22,800, showing an increase of only 872 during the preceding 10 years. The next ten years shows retrograde progress, as the population decreased by 438, and was only 22,362 in 1921 A. D.[1] Thus, during the 20 years from 1901 to 1921, the increase was only 434, though during the same period of 20 years between 1881 to 1901, the population had risen by 6,099, from 15,829 to 21,928. And this, inspite of the fact that there is a continual flow of immigration into Beawar from the surrounding parts of Rajputana, not only because it is a trade centre, but because it is the chief Mill area in the province.

There must be some reason for this state of affairs, for one would naturally expect that with the opening of new mills, activity in trade, facilities of locomotion, and improvement of communications, the rate of growth of population would at least be maintained, if not

[1] *Rajputana and Ajmer-Merwara Census Report* for 1921, Part I, p. 67.

accelerated. If the rate of growth had been maintained, the population of Beawar should have stood somewhere between 28,000 and 29,000 now. The non-growth of population in a mercantile place like Beawar should have attracted attention long ago. But the absence of public opinion and the lack of facilities to study important aspects of life in this Province, have failed to attract the attention even of the Census authorities to the matter; for, we do not find any attempt made in the last Census report to discuss the matter, and justify or explain this unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Beawar is a new town planned on modern lines, with broad streets, sufficiently wide lanes, and satisfactory medical and police arrangements. There is a Municipal Committee to look after the sanitation, the conservancy and other conveniences of the town. The climate of the place is salubrious and is reputed to be the best in Ajmer Merwara. How is it then, that with all these advantages and with a growing cotton industry, the population of Beawar is more or less stationary and has shown no appreciable increase during the last 30 years? How is it, that the matter has not attracted public attention? The author of this book, Vyas Tansukh has therefore done well in writing this book, thus drawing the attention of the public to this subject and awakening interest in the matter. The Local Government which must be keenly interested in the prosperity of the province will no doubt now give attention to the matter.

The author has attributed the non-increase of the population to the heavy rate of mortality obtaining in Beawar. There is no doubt of it. He bases his conclusion on facts and figures collected from the vital statistics for the last 30 years, kept and published by the Municipal Committee of the place. The carefully-compiled statistics, he gives in the appendix, prove

that though immigration into Beawar from the surrounding territories continues unabated, yet, owing to the high rate of mortality, the population of Beawar shows no increase. The population of Beawar which had been 21,921 in 1901 A. D. was only 22,362 in 1921 A. D., which means that the net growth in 20 years was 434 inspite of steady immigration from Mewar and Marwar. A comparison of the figures of births and deaths during these 20 years explains the situation fully. Against 18,547 births during the period, there were 23,429 deaths, showing that the deaths exceeded births by 4,882. Thus if there had been no immigration from the surrounding States, the population of Beawar would have decreased by 4,882 during this period. So far, therefore, as the population is concerned, immigration alone has saved Beawar from dwindling. It is equally clear that if deaths had not exceeded births, the population of Beawar in 1921 should have been very near 26,810 instead of only 22,362.

It is regrettable that even these arresting facts failed to arouse the interest of the Census Superintendent R. B. Braj Jiwanlal in this matter of vital importance. Beyond noting (p. 68) that the excess of deaths over births was annually 3,865 or 17 per cent of the total population of Beawar, he did not give a thought to this appalling state of affairs, or draw the serious attention of the Government to the extraordinary fact that in a place with a dry and healthy climate like Beawar, deaths exceeded births to the extent of 17 per cent of the total population.

The disquieting feature of the situation is that this high mortality and low birth rate continue to exist giving cause for anxiety. During the last eight years from 1921 to 1928 A. D., there have been 566 more deaths than births. And if this state of affairs continues, the Census of 1931 and 1941 will show

a further decrease in the population over that of 1921 A. D., inspite of the continual stream of immigration flowing into Beawar.

It is deplorable that deaths should exceed births in a town of rising cotton and wool industry. Unless remedied, this will operate as a permanent bar to the prosperity of Beawar. It is true that heavy mortality in this unfortunate province is not peculiar to Beawar. It is an unfortunate feature of Ajmer too, the chief town of the province. But that it should be so in a newly populated town so different from Ajmer where, in certain parts, there is great congestion and where, narrow lanes remain in an insanitary condition all the year round, is a particularly deplorable thing.

It appears from the figures compiled by the author with commendable industry that the mortality is particularly heavy amongst children. There were 23,429 deaths during the 20 years, 1901 to 1920 A.D. As, however, out of this period, figures of infant mortality for twentysix months are not available, we take 21,958 as the total number of deaths in Beawar during the remaining period of 17 years and 10 months for which period, figures of infant mortality are available. Now, out of 21,958, deaths of children under 12 months were 6,726 and under 10 years, 11,264. We thus find that out of every 100 deaths in Beawar a little over 30 were of children under 12 months and 51·3 of children below 10 years of age.

Infantile mortality in the first year of birth during 1901 to 1920, was 402·17 per thousand and rose to 408·04 per thousand during the years 1921 to 1928. Infantile mortality below 10 years of age was as high as 662·11 per thousand for 1921-1928! This heavy mortality should have attracted the attention of Government to the alarming state of affairs long ere this, and ought to do so now.

The comparative statement of births and deaths in the five principal towns of Ajmer-Merwara for 5 years, 1922-23 to 1926-27 A. D., which the author has appended to the book, clearly shows that for every hundred births, there were 104·3 deaths in Beawar; 69·5 in Nasirabad; 75·8 in Kekri; 55·4 in Todgarh, and 152·3 in Ajmer!

In Beawar, during these 5 years, there were 4,170 births and 4,352 deaths; while *in Ajmer*, there were *12,336 births and 18,800 deaths*! In Beawar, there were 186·17 births per thousand population, but in Ajmer only 107·78! *The death ratio is 194·61 for Beawar and 165·62 for Ajmer.* It may, however, be remarked that this ratio for Ajmer is based on the population figure of 1,13,512 for Ajmer, according to the Census of 1921. This figure is misleading, for as the report itself says, there were on the Census day, 14148[1] outside pilgrims in Ajmer, as the chief day of the Khwaja Sahib Fair which attracts pilgrims from all parts of India to Ajmer happened to fall on the day when the final enumeration for the Census of 1921 was made. This extra population should be deducted from 1,13,512 to show the true population of Ajmer. If, therefore, we take 99,364 as the population of Ajmer, we find that the *Ajmer death ratio would be 189·20 and the birth ratio 124·15.* The report of the Ajmer Municipal Committee for 1922-23 A. D. truly says: "*The sanitation of the city of Ajmer could hardly be worse than it is*, and this insanitary state of affairs has been commented upon for many years in this report." The Reports for subsequent years continue to tell the same sorry tale.

The number of births and deaths in the city of Ajmer during the last 14 years as given in the

[1] *Rajputana and Ajmer Merwara Census Report*, Vol. I, p. 58.

Reports of the Ajmer Municipal Committee should be an eye-opener :—

Year.	Births.	Deaths.	Excess of deaths over births,
1915-16	2648	3085	437
1916-17	2670	4673	2003
1917-18	2002	8979	6977
1918-19	1719	6840	5121
1919-20	2157	3761	1604
1920-21	1996	4284	2288
1921-22	2300	3970	1670
1922-23	2454	3451	997
1923-24	2359	4034	1675
1924-25	2466	3792	1326
1925-26	2473	3378	905
1926-27	2584	4145	1561
1927-28	2609	4147	1565
1928-29	2852	3764	912

These figures prove the woeful fact that the public health of Ajmer has been deteriorating. The Health department of the Ajmer Municipal Committee does not at all appear to be perturbed at its utter failure to discharge its duty. Nor does the Committee seem to be alive to its first duty to the citizens of Ajmer. The public are not aware of any special attention that the Committee have paid to this deplorable state of affairs. It is a pity that though these reports have been submitted year after year to Government, Government have neither drawn the serious attention of the Municipal Committee to their almost callous indifference to the health and lives of the citizens of Ajmer, nor have themselves taken any action in the matter to set things right.

The birth rate of Beawar has gone down from 38·82 in 1922-23 A.D. to 34·68 in 1926-27 A. D., while

the death rate has gone up from 34·88 in 1922-23 A. D. to 42·79 in 1926-27 A. D. The child mortality has gone up from 379·4 per thousand in 1922-23 A. D. to 460·3 in 1926-27 A. D., giving an average for the five years of 401·1.

When the death rate rose to 30 in Delhi and 34 in Calcutta this year, there was a shudder and a shiver, and the health officers began issuing bulletins. Such, however, is the death-like peace in Beawar and Ajmer that the death rate of 42·79 has not produced a ripple on the placid waters of the social and political life in this sleepy hollow of Ajmer-Merwara.

In Ajmer, the state of things is equally bad. While the birth rate which was 21·53 in 1922-23 A.D., is 22·85 in 1926-27 A.D.,[1] the death rate has gone up from 30·40 to 36·51. Where there were 1406·27 deaths for 1,000 births in Ajmer in 1922-23, A.D. there are 1604·10 deaths for 1,000, births in 1926-27 A.D. *Thus in Ajmer, out of every one thousand babies born, 448·5 die in their first year.*

The two interesting statements No. 18 and 19 tell their own tale Statement No. 18 compares the births and deaths in Beawar with those in Delhi, Agra, Muttra, Lucknow, Ahmedabad and Baroda during the five years 1923 A.D. to 1927 A.D. This comparative statement shows that in all these cities, births exceed deaths, while in Beawar and Ajmer the reverse is the case. While there are 110·3 deaths for 100 births in Beawar, there are only 75·7 in Delhi, 70·8 in Agra, 84·3 in Muttra, 83·5 in Lucknow, 99 in Ahmedabad and 92·8 in Baroda.

Statement No. 19 shows that while the infant mortality below one year in Beawar during the five years (1923-27 A.D.) was 418·38 per thousand and 448·5 in Ajmer, it was only 201·62 in Delhi, 239·49 in

[1] Figures for later years are not available.

Muttra, 204·63 in Agra and 337·98 in Ahmedabad.

The author has compared Beawar with the other towns of this small British province, and the result shows that leaving aside Ajmer, *where the state of affairs is still more deplorable*, Beawar is the only town where deaths preponderate over births.

It would have served a very useful purpose, if a comparison in this respect could have been made between Beawar and some of the other towns of Rajputana, like Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Bikaner, Kotah, Alwar and Jhalrapatan; but the author tells us that all efforts made by him to obtain information from these various States proved fruitless. It is a pity that the authorities of Indian States of Rajputana do not find it possible to co-operate in a matter of such importance even to their own States. The comparison made by the author with some towns in the other provinces of British India only emphasizes the sorry plight of the inhabitants of Ajmer-Merwara in this respect; for, the comparison brings home to us the fact that in all these towns situated in other provinces in British India, the death-rate is much lower than the birth-rate.

In view of the facts brought prominently to public notice by the author, it appears to me very necessary that the Local Government should without delay appoint a Committee to go into this question of vital importance to the people of Ajmer and Beawar, and after a thorough investigation of the causes of this lamentable state of affairs, recommend measures calculated to put a stop to the appalling death-rate in these two chief towns of this province.

PART V

MISCELLANEOUS

THE HERITAGE OF INDIA

OR

THE PRESERVATION OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS[1]

Let such approach this consecrated Land,
And pass in peace along the magic waste;
But spare its relics—let no busy hand
Deface the scenes, already how defaced!
Not for such purpose were these altars placed;
Revere the remnants Nations once revered:
So may our Country's name be undisgraced,
So may'st thou prosper where thy youth was reared,
By every honest joy of Love and Life endeared:

BYRON, *Childe Harold.*

SIR, I rise to move that this Bill, this very unwelcome Bill be circulated for eliciting public opinion thereon. It was with feelings of deep sorrow and pain that I read some of the provisions of this Bill, and it is with an oppressed heart and a feeling of helplessness that I rise to move this motion. The matter of the Bill is not only of the greatest, but is of vital importance to those who have the pride of their country in them, or who have even the slightest idea of their duty to the dead and to the living in this country. The Bill is so cleverly, so skilfully, so unfairly drafted as to conceal its real, sinister object behind a number of superfluities and details, behind a hypocritical show of solicitude for the preservation of the ancient monuments of India. The Bill is styled, The Ancient Monuments Preservation (Amendment) Bill. Verily, its object is nothing more and nothing less than to amend, to alter, to modify, in

[1] Speech delivered on the Ancient Monuments Preservation (Amendment) Bill in the Legislative Assembly, Simla, on 29 September 1931 A.D.

fact, partly to do away with the provisions for *Preserving* things, that exist in the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act of 1904. The shade of Lord Curzon must be watching with sadness and sorrow the blasting of some of his dearest hopes, the destruction of the work, of which he was justly proud, and with the distinction of the initiation of which, his memory will in this country be associated for all time to come.

Sir, the object of this measure is, to put it plainly, to legalise the removal from India of some of its most cherished possessions, its most sacred objects,—some of the remains of its ancient greatness,—its choicest treasures which nothing in the world can buy, which no price can secure. And the beauty of it all is that this is sought to be accomplished in the name of preservation of India's sacred trust, in the name of scientific research, in the name of helping civilization. Sir, what great wrong has been done to any country, to any people but the perpetrators of it started to do it after trumpeting forth their earnest desire to help their victims or to advance the cause of civilization and culture. Well has an American poet, Bertrand Shadwell, said:

> If you dare commit a wrong
> On the weak, because you're strong,
> You may do it—if you do it for his good;
> You may rob him, if you do it for his good;
> You may kill him, if you do it for his good;

And, Sir, would you regard it as a piece of good, fair work to attempt to rush this Bill through, towards the fag end of a short session without consulting public opinion, and without letting those, whom it deeply touches, have a chance of saying what they think of this sinister measure, and when half the elected Members of the House have gone home, and the minds of those who still remain in the House are occupied by urgent matters of grave financial and economic importance to the country?

Sir, the ancient monuments of India and the antiquities that lie buried underground in his country are, so far as antiquarian matters are concerned, the only things left in the country of which Indians feel proud, and which they are anxious to preserve against the inroads of the outsiders. Most of the rare and priceless antiquities, invaluable works of art, sculptures, paintings, manuscripts, precious stones that could be removed have already been taken away to England and other countries of Europe and America. Nearly all that could be removed has been removed out of India and there is little doubt that if it had been possible for European science and engineering skill to remove the Ajanta and the Ellora caves, the Taj, the Qutab Minar and the Adhai din ka Jhonpra, the Sanchi Stupas and such other things, they should by this time have been found adorning London and other cities in Europe.

Not satisfied with robbing India of all products of genius and works of art found on the surface, it is now sought to remove out of this country what lies buried underground. Are the Government of India, willing to stand by and see the country denuded of all those rare things that human genius could devise, invent or produce in this country, and are they willing to allow all and sundry of the exploiters of Europe and America to excavate and take away its heirlooms and the remains of its ancient greatness—treasures which are either the products of the highest efforts of human genius or are, which is a matter of the gravest consequence, the remains of our great ancestors who have, and will continue to, shed lustre on the name of our sacred Motherland as long as history endures, and whose memory we revere, and whose lives are a perennial source of inspiration to us in our lives.

Sir, to have allowed our antiquities to be taken out of the country is the greatest injury that the Government of India have done to India. Sir, the things that

have been and are sought to be taken out of India roughly fall into four classes (1) Sacred objects, such as the remains of founders of great religions, or other great men, whom large classes of people worship or hold in religious reverence and respect. (2) Works of art such as sculptures, antiquities, paintings, frescoes, illuminated manuscripts, bequeathing to posterity results of centuries of work and labour, of thought—the achievements, intellectual and spiritual, of the pioneers of civilization, in science, literature, philosophy and art, that illumine the pages of history and constitute a most brilliant chapter in the annals of mankind. (3) Records of facts and events necessary and essential to a proper understanding and elucidation. not only of the history of India, political, social, religious and economic, but of the evolution of art itself in its multifarious branches, and the reconstruction of that history by proper research and piecing together the results of such research in the various branches of human effort, for instance, coins, stone and copper-plate inscriptions, sculptures, arch-stones to show that true arches were known in ancient India; historic manuscripts found buried in mounds; and, fourthly, rare products of nature such as the wonderful *Kohinur*, the *Pitt*, the *Regent*, the first two being the greatest and the most glorious diamonds of the world, associated with the history of India in its various stages and the glorious deeds of the great men it has produced.

Sir, I am at present concerned only with objects which may come to light on excavations under a licence and are liable to be removed out of the country. These objects all fall under the four classes enumerated above. In the first class are sacred objects. And I will give here two instances where the feelings of the people of this country have been outraged. A few years ago a *stupa* at *Shahji ki Dheri*, near Peshawar, built by Emperor Kanishka in

the second century, was excavated and the remains deposited there with the greatest reverence and religious veneration by leading Indians of that time, of one who is worshipped and venerated by more than a third of the human race at the present time, one who has shed ever-lasting lustre on this great and ancient land, one who has ennobled the lives and has been the solace of millions of human beings in the last twenty-four centuries; one of the noblest of men, the Great Sakyamuni of Kapilavastu, the Buddha, were removed from its sacred place of rest and sent out of India to Burma which is on the eve of becoming a foreign country to us. In 1916, some of the relics,—remains of Buddha or other religious and holy men of India,—found in stupas at the Dharmrajika Stupa at Takshashila, modern Taxila, were given away to Buddhists of Ceylon, a foreign country, and removed out of India. Sending them to Burma or Ceylon, where Buddhism prevails is no palliation of the wrong done to India. Sir, these sacred remains are the property, *not of the Government of India for the time being*, not even the exclusive property of the present people of India, but also of the generations of Indians yet to come.

Sir, Buddha occupies a permanent and a high place in Hinduism. He is held to be the tenth Avatar or Incarnation of the Deity, just like Sri Ram or Sri Krishna. What country in the world except India has the right to keep in its sacred and reverential possession, the remains of the Enlightened, the Great Buddha, who was born in India, who lived all his life in India, and who died in India, and whose parents and ancestors all lived and died in India? Buddha was a product of India, son of Mother India in body and soul, the pride of India, and the crown of its glory. The glory of having given birth to Buddha and the privilege and honour of returning his mortal remains to Mother

Earth belong to India; and it is the pride and privilege, the honour and the duty of the sons and the daughters of India to guard those remains for all time to come.

To exhume his remains from their sacred resting place and send them out of India is, I say in extreme humiliation and sorrow, a great outrage against our feelings of religious reverence and veneration. I apologise for using strong language, but the occasion demands it, and we have felt this act as strongly as our weak, humiliated nature is capable of feeling.

And I say, Sir, that I would look with horror upon any attempt to exhume the remains of any Muslim saint in India. All Indians, whatever their faith and religion, whatever their culture, must and do look upon the remains of Muslim saints and Muslim great men that lie buried under mounds and ruins as sacred objects to be guarded and kept undisturbed by exploiters. I would condemn and resist all attempts to remove out of India to any country those sacred remains. It is the duty of all Indians to hold them as a sacred trust, and we regard it our duty to prevent their removal from India.

Sir, has any country, I ask, but Arabia the right to keep the sacred remains of the last of the Prophets? Has any country but England the right to keep the remains of the greatest of Englishmen, who though not held in sacerdotal or religious reverence, yet is the glory of England—the divine poet, Shakespeare? Would England or any other power dare think of removing the sacred Christian remains from Jerusalem—because Jerusalem is now a non-Christian country—to Europe which is peopled by Christians? It has been said that Government have dared to remove the sacred remains of Buddha from India and to deprive the country of its most cherished possession held sacred by its teeming millions, because Government can treat with indifference

the weakness and the helplessness of a disorganised, disunited and a degenerate race. Sir, I do not hold this view. My belief is that Government when they removed those sacred remains, were ignorant of the feelings and sentiments of the people of India, and did not view the matter in the light in which they should have viewed it. We hope the Government will take a correct view of the matter after the present discussion.

As regards Indian antiquities and works of art, Europe is full of them. All provinces of India have been ransacked, every nook and corner of it has been searched and antiquities and works of art that were buried in various parts of the country or lay on its surface, metalware, sculptures, stone and copper plates, paintings, old jewellery and old pottery prehistoric or post-historic, have been taken away; and the museums of England, France, Germany, Denmark, Holland, Austria and America, full of them, stand mocking at our helplessness and powerlessness to protect our cherished possessions. Byron's lament about Greece is equally true of India.

Cold is the heart, fair Greece ! that looks on Thee,
Nor feels as Lovers o'er the dust they loved ;
Dull is the eye that will not weep to see
Thy walls defaced, thy mouldering shrines removed
By British hands, which it had best behoved
To guard those relics ne'er to be restored :—
Curst be the hour when from their Isle they roved
And once again thy hapless bosom gored,
And snatched thy shreaking gods to Northern climes abhorred ![1]

The country has been denuded of its old manuscripts, invaluable for writing a proper history of India, and tracing the evolution of its social polity or its economic annals. I will give two instances to illustrate the loss suffered by India in this

[1] *Childe Harold.*

direction. Kautilya's *Artha Sāstra*, the standard work on Government and Economics in Sanskrit, unique of its kind, dealing with complicated problems of overseas and inland trade, international law and finance, was till recently a mere name. Several manuscripts of it were taken away to Europe but none was published. By a mere accident, a copy of it fell into the hands of Pandit Shyama Sastri of Mysore and he published it. It then became known that there were several copies of the book in Europe.

Sir, when I was writing a history of Ajmer, my native city, in 1911 A.D., I could not obtain in India any book containing an account of Sher Shah's capture of Ajmer, the only book which contains such an account, *Tarikhi Daudi*, was not to be found anywhere. I went to Calcutta and searched the Imperial Library, and the Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal; I went to the famous Khuda Bux Library of Bankipur; I examined the Library of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, and I wrote to Lucknow and Hyderabad, but all to no purpose. After a deal of enquiry, I learnt that only one copy of the *Tarikhi Daudi* was known to exist, and that was in the British Museum in London. Through the kind offices of Dr. Codrington, Mr. Edwards of the British Museum kindly had two pages of the work describing Sher Shah's visit to Ajmer photographed and sent to me and I was then able to complete the account I wished to give.

Then again Sir, when I wrote my monograph on Maharana Kumbha, one of the greatest of the Maharanas of Chitor, I could find no old portrait or painting of him. Eventually I was able to trace an old portrait of him to the India Office Library in London, and I obtained a photographic copy of it.

Sir, this shows to what difficulties and troubles students of history, literature and art in India are put by the removal of antiquities and manuscripts from

this country. This exportation of priceless treasures and heirlooms, which neither love nor money can produce or get, has been going on for a century and a half, and this Bill is going to help it further. Lord Byron thus condemns the taking away of antiquities from Greece:

What! shall it e'er be said by British tongue,
Albion was happy in Athena's tears?
Though in thy name the slaves her bosom wrung,
Tell not the deed to blushing Europe's ears;
The Ocean Queen, the Free Britannia, bears
The last poor plunder from a bleeding land:
Yes, she, whose generous aid her name endears.
Tore down those remnants with a Harpy's hand,
Which envious Eld forbore, and tyrants left to stand.

Childe Harold.

Colonel Tod, the great historian of Rajputana, is stated to have taken away eight hundred boxes full of antiquities, sculptures, coins, manuscripts, inscriptions, some of which have not yet been wholly deciphered and identified. Twenty thousand Sanskrit manuscripts were sent away from Nepal to Oxford only a decade ago, and who knows what invaluable and now unobtainable works have thus gone out of the country? Students of archæology know that Sir W. Jones, Colonel Mackenzie, Taylor, Fleet, Ballantyne and others took away large collections of Sanskrit manuscripts and antiquities which are kept in the India Office Library, London. The Bodleian Library of Oxford, the Indian Institute of Oxford, the Trinity College Library of Cambridge, the Edinburgh University Library possess large collections of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian manuscripts taken away from India. The library of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland contains thousands of such manuscripts and antiquities. Professor Bühler's large collection of Sanskrit manuscripts has found its way to Vienna and Hermann Jacobi's to Berlin. Germany is full of ancient Indian manuscripts

and antiquities and works of art. The libraries of Berlin, Tubingen, Stuttgart, Bonn, Strasburgh, Gottingen, Wurzburgh and Leipzic are full of them.

Sir, rather than allow any antiquities and finds to be taken out of India, the problem before India is how to get back all those antiquites, sculptures, manuscripts and works of art which have been taken away from India. Sir, when the final settlement is made between England and India, I do hope and trust that India would insist on England returning all these treasures which are now kept in its various museums and libraries and which are the great heirlooms of the people of India.

It has been said that in Palestine and Egypt, licences for exploration and excavations have been given to foreigners and that in the interests of research, the same may be allowed in India. But even in Egypt the licence to make excavations at Luxor in favour of Mr. Howard Carter was cancelled in *twenty-four hours when it was suspected that Egyptian antiquities were being removed from Egypt.* Is the Government of India at present in the hands of Indians to enable them to take the same action should an eventuality of a like character arise here? I would further say that I should like to see foreigners secure such licences in England, France, Germany or America. Where a country is under foreign rule and has no controlling voice in its administration, this exploitation has been permitted or tolerated.

His mind as barren and his heart as hard,
Is he whose head conceived, whose hand prepared,
Aught to displace Athenæ's poor remains:—
Her sons too weak the sacred shrine to guard.[1]

But, Sir, we have enough sense of shame left in us to refuse to consent, and become parties, to this robbery being legalized. I am told that exploiters from America are anxious to obtain licences to rob India of

[1]Byron's *Childe Harold.*

her treasures; that certain high officers and others are anxious that licences should be given to foreigners, who have the support of foreign financiers and who wish to undertake this exploitation and carry away from our country our antiquities and sacred objects, which no nation with any self-respect or sense of honour, or a sense of duty to the country and to its future generations would allow or tolerate.

It has been suggested that these finds would be better looked after in Europe and America and made good use of there. Sir, I would undertake to look after the valuable possessions of some of the protagonists of this doctrine. Would they give them to me? Why cannot the foreigners, if they are only honest and genuine students of Archæology and are inspired only with a genuine love of research, excavate the mounds, but let the relics of India's glorious past, remain in India, in her museums and libraries? Indians are more deeply and directly interested in them than any foreigners, however well intentioned.

Sir, if some of this material remains even unutilised for the present, let it remain so. We will make use of it in good time, but let us not be deprived of its possession. It has also been argued that if there are duplicates of a thing, if there are two images of a deity or two coins, why should one of them be not allowed to be taken away? This argument is the argument of a robber against his victim, of the strong against the weak, and reminds us of the fable of the wolf and the lamb which we have all read in our childhood. Will England or America listen to an argument like this, and on the strength of it part with its priceless treasures. Is there not enough room in the far-flung provinces of this vast country for duplicates or triplicates to be kept? And then, are there real exact duplicates of any antiquity, except coins?

Sir, as the matter of this measure is by no means

a matter of urgency, as no question of law and order and peace of the country is involved; as this is not a question of administrative stability, no harm will come to the matter if the Bill is taken up in January after circulation to the country. The rainy season has gone and no existing excavations will be affected and those not yet excavated will in no way be affected. I therefore request Government to allow this Bill to be circulated for eliciting public opinion, and not rush it through. Government will be in a better position to judge of the consequences of the measure when they are in possession of the considered views of those whom it affects so deeply.

I wish to make it clear that I am in no way against any excavation made in a proper and scientific manner. I will allow, even welcome, foreigners imbued with a desire to know things to come and help us in research work and make full use, as freely as we ourselves can do, of all finds. *But I oppose, with all the strength there is in me, the removal out of India of any of the finds whatsoever.* My only object in making this motion is to enable public opinion to express itself on the question of giving licences to foreigners and the terms on which such licences may be given. Absolutely nothing is lost by giving the public an opportunity to express its view, and taking the Bill into consideration after three or four months instead of at once. I would therefore earnestly appeal to the Honourable Member in charge of the Bill to give the public in India a fair opportunity to consider the provisions and the implications of this measure.

THE BEARD
AND
THE RULERS OF RAJPUTANA[1]

Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth.

SHAKESPEARE, *As You Like It.*

IN ancient times, the Hindu kings had their chins clean shaved. All available portraits of them show that they wore moustaches in various styles, some also having sidelocks clipped. No one, however, removed moustaches: no one appeared without them. Their faces were never clean shaved like Cæsar's or Napoleon Bonaparte's.

Throughout the Orient and especially by the Hindus, the moustache has always been regarded as the sign of manhood and the symbol of manliness. Curling the moustache means defiance. Simply touching it with the hand, signifies consciousness of strength and self-reliance. Curling the moustache in the presence of a superior is a sign of arrogance and has often resulted in bloodshed and mortal combat The war between Someshwar, the Chauhan King of Ajmer, (A.D. 1160-1179) and King Bhimdeva II of Gujrat, according to the *Prithviraja Rasa*, was the result of a Gujrat noble curling his moustache. It is stated that Solanki Pratap

[1]Reprinted from the *Hindustan Times*, Delhi.

cousin of King Bhimdeva, who at the time was a fugitive and a guest at the court of King Someshwar at Ajmer, innocently curled his moustaches as his blood was stirred, while the brave deeds of the heroes of the Mahabharata were being recited in the Durbar of Someshwar. The Chauhan Commander-in-Chief, Kān Rai, who was present at the Durbar, misinterpreted this act of Pratap as a sign of defiance, drew his sword and felled Pratap to the ground. This brought about a war between the Chalukyas of Anhilwara Patan and the Chauhans of Ajmer.

Religious people, priests, Brahmins and old men wore beards. The beard was a sign of old age and demanded respect and veneration. Rishis, Munis and venerable teachers usually wore beards. With the advent of the Musalmans in India, things began to change, and their habits and customs began to influence the manners and customs of the Hindus. Their domination weakened Hindu respect for old Hindu ideals. The outward appearance of the leaders of the people including their dress and fashion of wearing the hair on the face and the head also underwent a change. The Musalman who came from the North-West wore a beard. Akbar, the founder of the Mughal Empire in India, and his immediate successor, Jehangir adopted the Hindu custom of shaving their chins, but their successors, with the firm establishment of their rule, and their coming more and more under the influence of the Mullahs, gave up shaving the chin and began to wear beards. The Hindu Rajas who came in contact with the Mughal Emperors, by degrees adopted their fashion, modifying it to suit their notions of their character as the military leaders of the people. Thus when the Rajputs began to grow beards, instead of letting the beards hang down like the Musalmans, they made their beards stand upright and tied them to keep in position.



EMPEROR AKBAR.

MUGHAL EMPERORS

The last Hindu Emperor of India, the illustrious Prithviraja Chauhan (A.D. 1179 to 1192) wore only moustaches. The first Musalman Emperor of India, Akbar the Great (A.D. 1556-1605) also had only moustaches. In appearance he did not differ in any way from an ordinary Hindu monarch. He often dressed like a devout Hindu, applied sandal-wood paste to his forehead, put on a pearl necklace, held a pearl rosary in his hands and wore ear-rings. The best extant portraits of him show him as a devout Hindu king. His son Jahangir (1605 to 1627 A.D) grew only whiskers, but had no beard. Emperor Shahjahan (A.D. 1627 to 1658) was the first to grow a beard. His successors, Aurangzeb (1658-1707), Bahadurshah (1707 to 1712) and Jahandarshah (1712-13) had beards. Furrukhsayar (1713-1719) wore a close-clipped ("khaskhashi") beard. The puppets, Rafiuddarjat and Rafiuddaula (1719), had small beards, but Muhammad Shah (1719-1748) reverted to the old Hindu practice of having his chin (like the Great Akbar) clean shaved. He wore ear-rings with pearls and looked like an ordinary Hindu monarch. His successors, Ahmad Shah (1748 1754), Alamgir II (1754-59), Shah Alam (1759 to 1806), Akbar Shah II (1806-1837) and Bahadur Shah II (1837-1859), all grew beards.

THE BRITISH

Since the passing of India under the British Crown in the time of Empress Victoria, there have been two Emperors, Edward VII and George V, who have both rejoiced in beards.

All the Governors-General of India from Warren Hastings (1774-1785) to Lord Dalhousie (1848-1856) had their faces clean shaved; no one grew a beard. Of the Viceroys, the Earl of Canning (1856-1862) and the Earl of Elgin (1862-63) were also clean shaved.

Lord Lawrence (1864-1869) was the first Viceroy whose face was adorned with a beard; his successor the Earl of Mayo, (1869-72), had his face clean shaved. His three successors, Lord Northbrook (1872-1876), the Earl of Lytton (1876-1880), and the Marquis of Ripon (1880-1884) all had beards, the first a short one, and the last a very respectable one. The Marquis of Dufferin (1884-88) wore a French beard. Lord Lansdowne(1888-94)had only a moustache and sidelocks like the Hindu Rajas of medieval times. The Earl of Elgin (1894-99) wore a beard. The face of Lord Curzon (1900-05) was clean shaved. Both Lord Minto (1905-10) and Lord Hardinge (1910-16) grew moustaches. Lord Chelmsford (1916-21), the Marquis of Reading (1921-26) and Lord Irwin (1926-31) were clean shaved. The present Viceroy, Lord Willingdon, wears small moustaches

MEWAR

The kings of Mewar, the most respected of the Rajput rulers in India, upto Maharana Amarsingh II (1698-1710) had only moustaches and thin close-clipped side-locks coming down to the lobes of the ear. The pride of Hindu chivalry, the Great Maharana Pratap, his son Maharana Amarsingh and the famous Maharana Rajsingh, the great opponent of Aurangzeb, were all without beards. Amarsingh II had a thin line of hair, a continuation of the moustache extending to below the lobes of the ear—an apology for whiskers. Maharana Sangaramsingh II (A D. 1710-34) was the first to grow a beard, but a short-clipped one. Since then none of his successor has had his chin clean shaved. Jagatsingh II (1734-51), Pratapsingh II (1751-54), Rajsingh II (1754-61), Arsi (1761-73), Hamirsingh (1773-78) wore only short-clipped beards. Bhimsingh (1778-1828) was the first to grow a full beard, the hair drawn upwards in true Rajput fashion, a custom which was

kept up by the succeeding Maharanas, Jawansingh (1828-38), Sardarsingh (1838-42), Sarupsingh (1842-61), Shambhusingh (1861-1874), Sajjansingh (1874-1884) down to Maharana Fatehsingh (1884-1930). The present ruler, Maharana Bhopalsingh, like the old Hindu kings, has his chin clean shaved.

MARWAR

The kings of Marwar (Jodhpur State) from Rao Sihaji (died in A.D. 1273), the founder of the Rathor Power in Rajputana, down to Maharaja Mansingh (1803-1843), had their chins clean shaved. Rao Ranmal, also called Ridmal, (about 1427-1438), wore long moustaches curled up and prominent sidelocks. From 1438 to 1453, Marwar was in the possession of the Maharana of Mewar. Rao Jodha (1453-1488), the founder of the town of Jodhpur, had side-locks and moustaches. Rao Satal (1488-91) and Rao Suja (1491-1515) and Gānga (1515-1531) had long moustaches. Maldeva (1531-62) one of the greatest of the kings of Marwar, followed suit. Chandra Sen (1562-1580), Askaran (1580-1581), Raisingh (1581-1583), Udaisingh, the Mota (fat) Raja (1583-1595), who accepted Akbar's suzerainty, had side-locks and curled moustaches. Sursingh (1595-1619), Gajsingh (1619-1638), Jaswantsingh (1638-78), Ajitsingh (1678-1724), and Abhaisingh (1724-1749), had their faces adorned with side-locks and moustaches. Ramsingh (1749-1751) was the first to wear mutton-chop whiskers. Maharaja Bakhtsingh (1751-52) and Bijaisingh (1752-93) contented themselves with side-locks and moustaches. Bhimsingh (1793-1803), was the first to have a full growth of whiskers. Mansingh (1803-43) was a close follower of Bhimsingh in this respect. Maharaja Takhtsingh (1843-1873) was the first to grow a beard, and Maharaja Jaswantsingh (1873-1895) kept up the beard. Maharaja Sardarsingh (1895-1911) was beardless and Maharaja Sumérsingh (1911-18) and the present

Maharaja Umedsingh (1918) have also discarded the beard, contenting themselves with moustaches.

JAIPUR

Of the kings of Jaipur, Ramsingh II (A.D. 1835-80) was the first to grow a beard. Prithviraja (1503-27), Puranmal (1527-34), Bhimsingh (1534-36), Ratansingh (1536-47), Askaran (1548), Bharmal (1548-74), and Bhagwandas (1574-89) wore only moustaches and very thin side-locks. Bhagwandas's successor Mansingh (1589-1614), the famous General of Emperor Akbar, wore nothing but small moustaches. His successors Bhaosingh (1614-21), Jaisingh I (1621-67), Ramsingh I (1667-89), Bishansingh (1689-1700), wore side-locks. Sawai Jaisingh II (1700-1743) had sidelocks and very prominent moustaches. Ishrisingh (1743-50), gave up the sidelocks and contented himself with moustaches. Maharaja Madhosingh I (1750-68) wore side-locks rather broad towards the lower end reaching a little below the lobes of the ear. Prithvisingh (1768-1778) died young and Pratapsingh (1778-1803) wore sidelocks. Jagatsingh was the first and the only ruler of Jaipur (A.D. 1803-1818) who wore full whiskers. Jaisingh (1818-1835) did not shave the chin and Ram-Singh II (1835 80) was the first to have a full beard, and his successor Maharaja Madhosingh (1880-1922) followed his example. The present ruler Maharaja Mansingh (1922) is clean shaved.

BIKANER

The portraits of the kings of Bikaner clearly show the various stages the beard has passed through. Rao Bika, a son of Rao Jodha, the king of Jodhpur, founded Bikaner in A.D. 1488. Rao Bika (1488-1504), Rao Nara (1504) reigned only four months. Rao Lunkaran (1505-26), Jaitsi (1526-42), Maldeo, king of Marwar, who remained in possession of Bikaner from 1542 to 1544, Rao Kalyansingh (1544-71),

Raja Raisingh (1571-1612), Dalpatsingh (1612-13), Soor singh (1613-31), Karansingh (1631-69), Anupsingh (1669-98), Sarupsingh (1698-1700), all wore only moustaches and side-locks. Maharaja Sujansingh (1700-35), and Zorawarsingh (1735-1745), wore side-locks reaching much lower down than their predecessors, with the pointed end of the locks coming near the chin. Maharaja Gajsingh (1745-87), and Rajsingh (1787) who only reigned for ten days wore muttonchop whiskers. Pratapsingh (1787), and Maharaja Suratsingh (1787-1828), and Ratansingh (1828-51) wore full whiskers. Maharaja Ratansingh's successor, Maharaja Sardarsingh (1851-72) was the first to give up shaving the chin and grow a beard. Māharaja Dungarsingh (1872-87), also wore a beard. The present ruler, Maharaja Gangasingh has given up the beard reverting to the old Hindu practice of shaving the chin.

BUNDI

Of the Maharaos of Bundi, no one indulged in a beard till the year A.D. 1681. Uptil Rao Surjan, the Chiefs of Bundi were feudatories of the Maharanas of Mewar. Rao Surjan, who became Maharao in 1554 A.D. went over to Akbar in 1568 A.D., who recognised him as Rao Raja of Bundi. He died in 1585 A.D. Neither he nor his successors Bhoj (1585-1607), Ratansingh (1607-11), Shatrusal (Chhatrasal) (1611-58), Bhaosingh (1658-81) grew a beard. They were all content with keeping side-locks and moustaches. Maharao Anirudsingh (1681-1695), was the first to grow a beard. His successor Bhudhsingh (1695-1739), had only mutton-chop whiskers. Maharao Umedsingh, who came to the throne in 1739, grew a beard. Umedsingh reigned from A.D. 1739 to 1771 and then retired from the throne and subsequently grew a beard. Ajitsingh (1771-73) had only moustaches. Maharao Bishansingh (1773-1821) had whiskers, Maharao Ramsingh (1821-90)

had his chin shaved, but wore whiskers in Rajput fashion, the hair standing upright. Maharao Raghubirsingh (1890-1927) enjoyed a big flowing beard. The present ruler, Maharao Ishrisingh (1927), also grows a beard.

KOTAH

None of the kings of Kotah has uptil now kept a beard. Maharao Madho Singh, who was the second son of Maharao Ratan Singh of Bundi, was given Kotah in 1625 A.D. and became an independent sovereign (1625-47), Mukand Singh (1647-58), Jagatsingh (1658-83), Paimsingh (1683-84), Kishorsingh (1684-95), Ramsingh (1695-1719) and Bhimsingh (1719-20) all had side-locks. Maharao Arjunsingh (1720-23), Durjansal (1723-56) Ajit Singh (1756-58) and Shatrusal or Chhatarsal (1758-64) gave up even this slight growth of the hair by the ears. Maharao Gumansingh (1764-71) again adopted side-locks. Maharao Umedsingh (1771-1819) had whiskers, but Maharao Kishor Singh (1819-27) wore neither whiskers nor side-locks. Maharao Ramsingh II (1827-66) and Maharao Chattarsal (1866-89) had whiskers only. Maharao Umedsingh (1889), the present ruler of Kotah, has only moustaches, and his chin is clean shaved.

JHALAWAR

Zalimsingh (died 1824 A.D.), who had been Prime Minister of the State of Kotah, was recognised by the British Government, in lieu of great services rendered by him during the Pindaree War, as the hereditary Prime Minister of the State. He grew only moustaches. His son Madhosingh (1824-34) showed no talent. His grandson Madansingh (1834-45) was recognized by the British Government as the first Raj Rana of Jhalawar in 1838 A.D. (date of creation of the State). He, like his grandfather Zalimsingh, wore whiskers. Madansingh's successor Prithvisingh (1845-75) grew a

beard. His successor, Maharaj Rana Zalim Singh (1875-96) wore only moustaches, as also his successor Bhawanisingh (1896-1929). Both had their chins clean shaved. The present Chief, Maharaj Rana Rajendrasingh (1929), has his face clean shaved, no moustaches, no beard.

SIROHI

Of the rulers of Sirohi, Lakha (1451-83), Jagmal (1483-1523), Akhairaj (1523-33), Raisingh (1533-43), Dudha (1543-53), Udaisingh (1553-62), Mansingh (1562-1571), Surtan (1571-1610), Rajsingh (1610-20) no portraits are available. Akhairaj II (1620-73) alone has left a portrait and he appears to have kept only side-locks and prominent moustaches. Akhairaj's successor Udaisingh (1673-76), Berisal (1676-97), Chhatarsal (1697-1705), Mansingh *alias* Umedsingh (1705-49). Prithviraja (1749-1772), Takhtsingh (1772-82), Jagatsingh (1782), Berisal II (1782-1808), and Udaibhan (1808-47), have also left no available portraits. Shivsingh (1847-62) and Umedsingh (1862-75), wore full whiskers, Kesrisingh (1875-1920) had a regular beard drawn up and turned round the ear. The present ruler, Maharao Sarup Ramsingh (1920), has only slight moustaches.

ALWAR

Rao Raja Pratap Singh (1775-90) was the first Raja of Alwar, and he wore whiskers. Bakhtawarsingh (1790-1815) and Benaisingh (1815-1857) had beards. Their successors Sheodansingh (1857-74) and Mangal Singh (1874-92) had only moustaches. The present ruler, Maharaja Jaisingh (1892), has his face clean shaved, no moustaches, no whiskers, no beard.

KARAULI

The Rajas of Karauli were beardless till the time of Ratanpal (about A. D. 1680) who was the first to grow a close-clipped beard. Proximity to the Mughal capitals, Agra and Delhi, was evidently the

cause of the rulers of Karauli thus early succumbing to Muslim influence in this respect. Ratanpal's son Kunwarpal followed his father in this respect, but his successor Gopalpal (1725) contented himself with large side-locks only. His successors, Turuspal (1757-72), and Manikpal (1772-1804) had only moustaches, though large and prominent ones. Amolakpal (1804) alone of all the rulers of Karauli had whiskers Harbakshpal (1804-1837) and Pratappal (1837-49) grew beards. Narsinghpal (1849-54) appears to have given it up, but Madanpal (1854-69) adopted the beard again. Lakshmanpal (1869) who probably died young, grew no beard. Jaisinghpal (1869-76) and Arjunpal (1876-86) and Maharaja Bhanwarpal Deva (1886-1927) had flowing beards. The present ruler, Bhompal Deva (1927), also wears a beard.

JAISALMER

The Maharawals of Jaisalmer are *Yadavas* and claim direct descent from Sri Krishna, the great Hindu *Avatar* (Incarnation of God). The dynasty has had a chequered history. Jaisalmer is the last of its nine capitals and was founded in S. 1212 (A.D. 1165) The capitals are enumerated in the couplet:—

मथुरा, काशी, प्रागवड, गजनी, और भटनेर ।
दिगम, दिरावल, लद्रवो नवों जैसलमेर ॥

Muttra, Benares, Allahabad, Ghazni and Bhatner, Digam, Dirawal, Ladarwa and the ninth Jaisalmer.

The rulers of Jaisalmer style themselves *Pachham ke Padshah* (Kings of the West). No portrait is available of the Maharawals who ruled before Ramsingh. Bhimsingh (1577-1613) had moustaches and side-locks. Portraits of Kalyandas (1613) and his successors, Manohardas and Ramchander, are not available. Sabal Singh (1651-60) and Amarsingh (1660-1701) kept to moustaches and side-locks. Jaswantsingh (1701-08) adopted muttonchop whiskers. Budhsingh (1708-22)

gave up shaving the chin but only allowed the hair to show themselves on the chin and the jaws, an apology for a beard. Tejsingh (usurper), who ruled about a year wore prominent sidelocks like Maharawal Amar Singh. Sawaisingh, who also ruled for a year, has left no available portrait. Maharawal Akhaisingh (1723-62) wore sidelocks, which became very prominent and broad as they approached the chin. His successor Maharawal Mulraj (1762-1820) was the first to grow a beard. Maharawal Gajsingh (1820-46) did the same, Maharawal Ranjitsingh (1846-64), who came to the throne when 3 years old and died when 21, had no beard. Maharawal Berisal (1864 91) had a regular beard. Maharawal Salivahan (1891-1914) also had a beard. The present ruler, Maharawal Jawaharsingh (1914), wears only moustaches but no beard.

DHOLPUR

The first Raja was Lokendrasingh. But no portrait of his is available nor are those of Kirtisingh and Bhagwantsingh (1836-73), Nihalsingh (1873-1901) grew only moustaches as also Ramsingh (1901-11). The present chief Udaibhan Singh (1911) also contents himself with moustaches.

KISHANGARH

The first thirteen rulers of Kishangarh, Maharaja Kishansingh (1597-1615), the founder of the State; Sahasmal (1615-28), Jagmal (1628-28), Harisingh (1628-43), Rupsingh (1643-1658) (who founded Rupangarh), Mansingh (1658-1706), Raj Singh (1706-1748) Sawantsing (1748-64), Sardarsingh (1764-66) Bahadursingh (1766-82), Biradhsingh (1782-88), Pratapsingh (1788-98) and Kalyansingh (1798-1838) grew only moustaches and side-locks. Some of them had the hair of the side-locks curled but wore no whiskers or beard. Mohkamsingh

(1838-41) was the first to have a beard, but it was a close clipped one. His successor Prithvisingh (1841-79) was the first and the last to grow a regular beard. Sardulsingh (1879-1900), however, gave it up. Maharaja Madansingh (1900-26) did not nurse it. The present ruler, Maharaja Yagyanarain Singh (1926) has only moustaches.

PARTAPGARH

The State was founded by Maharana Kumbha's younger brother Khema's son, Suryamal. He died in 1531. His successors Baghsingh (1531-35), Raisingh (1535-53), Bika (1553-79) Tejsingh (1579-94), Bhanusingh (1594-1604), Singha (1604-23), Jaswantsingh (1623-34), have left no portraits. Harisingh (1634-74), Pratapsingh (1674-1708), Pirthvisingh (1708-1717) grew only moustaches and side-locks and looked like the early Maharanas of Mewar. Ramsingh (1717-18) wore sidelocks with heavy flowing whiskers. Umedsingh (1718-23), Gopalsingh (1723-58) and Salimsingh (1758-75) wore thin side-locks. But Sanwatsingh (1775-1844) gave up the side-locks and grew only moustaches. His successor Dalpatsingh (1844-64) was the first to grow a beard. Udaisingh (1864-90) and Raghunath singh (1890-1929) kept up the beard. The present ruler, Ramsingh (1929), has a slight moustache but is otherwise clean shaved.

BHARATPUR

Bharatpur is a state, where the ruling family belongs to the Jat clan. No ruler has had whiskers. Maharaja Jaswantsingh (1853-93) was the first and the last to grow a beard. The first four Rajas of Bharatpur, Thakur Badansingh (1732-55), Raja Surajmal (1755-63), Jawahirsingh (1763-65) and Ratansingh (1765-69) wore thick prominent curled up moustaches. The portrait of Kesrisingh (1769-77) is evidently of young age as it shows no hair on the face. His successor Ranjitsingh

(1777-1805), Randhirsingh (1805-23) Baldeosingh (1823-25), Durjansal (1825-26) and Balwantsingh (1826-53) wore moustaches in the same style but a little smaller and less prominent. Jaswantsingh grew a beard but his successor, Ramsingh, who came to the throne in 1893, was deposed in 1900. He only wore moustaches. His successor, Maharaja Kishansingh (1900-29) had only moustaches and died in 1929 A.D. The present Maharaja, Brajendrasingh (1929), is a minor.

TONK.

The Nawabs of Tonk are Musalmans and grow beards. Amirkhan (1817-34), the founder of the State, was succeeded by Wazirmuhammed Khan (1834-64). Muhammed Ali Khan came to the throne in 1864 but was dethroned in 1866 and sent to Benares. His son Muhammad Ibrahim Ali Khan reigned from 1867 to 1930 A.D. He was succeeded by his eldest son Nawab Muhammed Saadat Ali Khan in June, 1930

Thus it appears that neither the Mughal Emperors nor the Rajput Maharajas had anything to do with the beard till the year 1627 A.D. The seventeenth century marks the adoption of the beard by the Crown in India. Shahjahan was the first Emperor of India to adopt it, and the Raja of Karauli (1680) was the first Maharaja in Rajputana to grow a beard. Bundi followed close with a beard in 1682; Mewar (1710), Jaisalmer (1711) and Alwar (1791) adopted it in the eighteenth century. The rest, with one exception, Jhalawar, Sirohi, Jaipur, Marwar, Bikaner, Kishangarh and Bharatpur, adopted the beard in the nineteenth century. The solitary exception is Kotah, whose Rulers have unanimously discarded the beard.

HINDUS:

THEIR STRENGTH AND THEIR WEAKNESS[1]

When riseth Lacedemon's Hardihood,
When Thebes Epaminondas rears again,
When Athens' children are with hearts endued,
When Grecian mothers shall give birth to men,
Then may'st thou be restored ; but not till then.

BYRON, *Childe Harold.*

If it is true, as Pope says, that the proper study of mankind is man, it is no less true that the proper study for a Hindu living in the twentieth century and conscious of the forces working round him, is the study of the history of the Hindu race. The future "has its roots in the past," says Lord Morley. It is the past that in its results is present in the present and will to a certain extent, shape the future. The law of causation is inevitable and unerring. Those who are vitally interested in the present and the future welfare of the Hindu race, as well as those whose interest in the matter is merely intellectual, find the history of the Hindus, their culture and civilization, their social and spiritual ideals and their practical philosophy of life, a subject of absorbing interest.

All serious students of the history of sociology have before them the extraordinary historical phenomenon of a great race, which occupying at the dawn of history a high position in the world and having survived all the political cataclysms, social upheavals and racial eruptions that engulfed powerful nations and destroyed old world empires, still shows in no uncertain degree,

[1]Reprinted from the *Swadeshmitram* (Madras English Weekly) Annual Number, 1928 A.D.

spiritual and moral vitality. This amazing vitality of the Hindu race compels the attention and challenges the interest of all who study the evolution of man or of human society.

The chequered career of the Hindu nation during the last thousand years furnishes abundant materials to a historian to be able to trace and well appraise the influence of spiritual ideals on the political life of a people, as also the effect of their social beliefs and practices on it. He will see how the wholesome influence of a highly intellectual culture and spiritual ideals governing the ordinary life of a civilized nation are checked, modified and marred by evil customs, pernicious practices and wrong and narrow social ideals, which create distraction, division and disunion.

India, the most fertile and favoured of climes, in all ages the cynosure of all eyes, has been the centre of gravity in the world's affairs. Seekers after truth, and the spiritually inclined from Greece, Persia, China and other countries, like Pythagoras, Pyrrho, Democritus of Thales, Fa-Hian, Hiouen-Thsang and Alberuni came to India to learn wisdom: the worldly-minded to get the good things of the world. "The gorgeous East" and "Wealth of Ind" of Milton, "India, the sole mother of precious stones" of Pliny, the "Golden India" of Alexander the Great stirred the imagination of the Europeans in all ages. Its fabled wealth fired the ambition of powerful rulers of distant lands and attracted the adventurers and free-booters of Asia from Semiramis and Alexander to Mahmud Ghaznavi, Changez Khan, Timur and Ahmad Shah Durrani. India repelled the earlier invasions and the enemy returned home beaten and battered or perished on the way foiled in his attempt. Semiramis, Alexander and Seleucus are instances in point. Later attempts partly or wholly succeeded as the internal dissensions in India increased and developed. Most of the invaders of the

first few centuries of the Christian era, however, who came to conquer remained to worship. Victorious Rome was held captive by vanquished Greece: India did better still. It absorbed the invaders and made them its votaries, as the history of the Bactrian Greeks, Huns, Kushans, Kshtrapas and Shakas (Scythians) amply shows.

But a time at last arrived when a new school of social thought arose in India with a vision blurred and an outlook, narrow, limited and exclusive. It rejected the simpler, purer, higher ideals of life inculcated by the earlier Sages and Thinkers of India. Taking shelter under the cover of mistaken notions of heredity, conservation of spiritual energy, and preservation of the purity of blood and culture, it introduced in Hindu society a spirit of exclusiveness and disruption that began to destroy the solidarity of the Hindu race and weaken its power of resistance. The disruptive forces once set in motion continued to gather strength, with the result that the social organisation of the country deteriorated and the political ideals of the people became degenerated; for the ideas of nationality and independent national existence became dimmed. The consequence was that the foreign invader obtained a more or less firm footing in the exposed parts of India; their advent and presence in the country being due to dissensions and disunion amongst the Hindu Rulers.

The early Arab raids in Sindh and the free-booting expeditions of Mahmud Ghaznavi, while giving a precarious foothold to the foreign enemy in the Western regions of India made little permanent impression on the heart of the country. But it proclaimed to the world that the body politic of India suffered from a chronic illness. The Ghori invasions followed the proclamation. For the first time, foreign enemies secured permanent lodgement in the heart of the country. It is, however, remarkable that though

successive waves of racial eruptions from Central Asia broke on the shores of India and submerged parts of it, and the last wave developed into an inundation lasting for about two centuries, Hindu India emerged from all this welter of history very nearly whole.

For about three centuries and a half beginning with the end of the twelfth and ending with the beginning of the sixteenth century, Hindustan (Upper India) remained engaged in a death-struggle with its neighbours, the Afghans, who though enemies politically were ethnically allied to the Hindus, for, not only was the blood that ran in their bodies the same as that of the Hindus, but Afghanistan itself had only recently ceased to be a part of Hindu India. The founding of Ghazni by Gajsingh, an ancestor of the Maharaval of Jaisalmer, and the extending of the dominion of King Sobhagsen and others over the whole of Afghanistan and Baluchistan was then a matter of recent history

Though during this period of three centuries, the Afghans retained possession of Delhi and a part of the Punjab, and now and then attacked the neighbouring princes and provinces, and whenever a powerful and ambitious ruler came to the throne, exercised suzerain power over some of them, yet the whole of Rajputana was independent and many Hindu princes in the Punjab and the United Provinces enjoyed sovereign power. The Afghan kings of Delhi were often reduced to such straits by the Hindus that except a semblance nothing of real sovereignty remained with them. The extent of their power and the precarious nature of their rule is fully exposed by what Zia-uddin Barni in his celebrated *Tarikhi Firoz Shahi* says of the time when Ghayasuddin Balban came to the throne: "The Western gates of the city of Delhi were shut at afternoon prayer (5 p.m.) and no one dared to go out of the city in that direction after that hour whether he travelled as a pilgrim or *with the display of a Sovereign*!"

These three centuries of Afghan rule was that of adventurers and military chiefs of tribes and factions over Delhi and the Punjab interspersed with raids into neighbouring and distant parts of India, as the internal dissensions in the Hindu States and their mutual recriminations or jealousies gave opportunities to the Sultans to secure loot or vaunt military power. There was no settled or stable Government, one dynasty following another in quick succession, assassination and murder opening the way to the throne. The Sultans had no idea of statesmanship or statecraft. The social life of the people organized in complete independence of political conditions which were liable to violent fluctuations, flowed undisturbed and unconcerned, taking little heed of the change of rulers, violent and bloody palace revolutions and occasional raids.

While the current of this Afghan rule ebbed and flowed, the inherent strength of the military castes of the Hindus asserted itself and not only was the territorial strength of the Sultanate eventually reduced to narrow limits but its military power was completely crushed. Led by Maharana Kumbha, the Hindus conquered Malwa, took Ajmer, defeated the Sultan of Gujrat and reduced the rule of the Sultan of Delhi to a small circumscribed area. The political horizon of India showed unmistakable signs that the time was not distant when the Hindus would recover lost supremacy and drive out the foreigners. All that was wanted was the appearance of a man of commanding personality, the emergence of a leader who could gather together the scattered units of power and lead them against the common enemy. Such a leader appeared in the person of Maharana Sangram Singh, known in history as Rana Sanga of Mewar. Mr. Erskine in his *Memoirs of Babur*

says: "The Empire (?) of Delhi was in confusion. It had become the prey to the strongest, and the former success, and the mighty power of the Rana might seem to justify at once his hopes of seating himself on the vacant throne of the Lodis, and his more reasonable and glorious ambition of expelling the Afghans and Toorky invaders from India and restoring her own Hindu race of kings and her native institutions."

Such promising prospect, however, was darkened by those fatal defects in Hindu character which had developed with the rise of certain social and religious beliefs and practices. The cup of success so near to the lips was dashed to the ground. While the inherent vitality of the Hindu race was asserting itself, the fissiparous tendencies of Hindu society aided by the anti-national influences of feudalism were having their full play. The single unifying influence of the personality of the heroic Maharana whose valorous exploits, chivalrous character and political foresight had won him the willing allegiance of the rulers of Rajputana was eventually neutralized by the centrifugal forces and the disruptive tendencies of Hindu society at whose heart gnawed the disintegrating caste-system with sharpened teeth. The ravaging effect on the Hindu nation of the narrow and exclusive anti-national tendencies of the teachings of the Vaishnava Acharyas and others separating brother from brother, caste from caste began to loom large in the heavens as evil portents, when, on the ruins of Afghan rule, a capable adventurer from the distant highlands of Samarkand appeared on the scene and made a bid for political ascendancy in India, That a Turk driven from his home in Turkistan and setting up rule in Kabul should cross over to India with twelve thousand men all-told, to conquer the country inhabited by thirty crores of people immeasurably superior to the invaders in Arts and civilzation, with great traditions of military glory behind them, and

actually succeed in founding a kingdom is a unique phenomenon of the highest significance in the history of the world. The phenomenon is so astounding that the world a thousand years hence might well be excused if it declined to accept it as a historical fact.

With the defeat of the Hindu Confederacy under the valiant Maharana Sanga at Kanua in 1526 A.D. and the triumph of Babar, the hopes of Indian independence disappeared for the time being. The Mughal (Turk) empire founded by Akbar, the grandson of Babar, remained intact for two centuries. For the first time a Muslim State in the real sense of the term came into existence in India. The fame of this empire was wafted to distant lands. Ambassadors from England and Persia came to India in acknowledgment of its greatness. But the founding, the rearing up and the maintenance of this empire was mainly due to the co-operation and the active help of the Hindus. Colonel Tod, the incomparable historian of Rajputana, says: "The Mughals were indebted for half their conquests to the *Lakh Tulwar Rathoran*" (hundred thousand swords of the Rathor Rajputs) and again, "the most brilliant conquests of these monarchs (Akbar, Jehangir and Aurangzeb) were by their Rajput allies, who...........encountered at command the Afghans amidst the snows of the Caucasus or made the furthest Chersonese tributary to the empire."

And as soon as this Hindu aid was withdrawn, the empire crumbled to pieces like a house of cards. With the decline of statesmanship in the Mughal empire under Aurangzeb and the eclipse of the political genius of the race made illustrious by that enlightened monarch, Akbar the Great, the empire rapidly declined under the steady pressure of the Hindus, the Rajputs in the West, Mahrattas in the South and the Sikhs in the North. The Mahrattas eventually reduced the Mughal monarchs of Delhi to a position of subordination to themselves

and began to levy tribute in the shape of *chouth* from the Mughals everywhere—in the Deccan, in Bengal, in Oudh and the Punjab. They overran the whole of India.

The invasion of India by Nadir Shah was of the nature of a raid against the Mughal monarch of Delhi and left the question of the political supermacy in the country untouched. The attempt of the Afghan King, Ahmed Shah Durrani to revive Muslim supremacy failed to achieve its object. The battle of Panipat in 1761 A.D. failed to shatter the Mahratta power. All it did was to prevent the Hindus becoming at once the *de jure* masters of India which they had become in actual fact. Their domination over the Mughal puppets on the throne of Delhi remained undiminished and absolute. Even this temporary check was due to a division in the Hindu camp, to the Hindu States of Rajputana in a body holding aloof at the critical time and letting the Mahrattas bear the burnt of the Afghan attack at Panipat. But the fact that the resistance to the foreign invader, Ahmad Shah, was offered principally by the Hindus fully proves that the predominant power in India at the time was the Hindus

The Mahrattas speedily reasserted their complete supremacy over the whole of India including the Punjab, Bengal and Rajputana and would have driven out the last representatives of the Mughals, had not the English appeared in this unfortunate country at the psychological moment. It was the English who prevented the Hindus from finally consolidating their power and sweeping away the remnants of Mughal power from Delhi, Lucknow and the Deccan. Sir Willlam Hunter and other English historians duly acknowledge that it was from the Hindus that the English took India. That the Hindus after two centuries of Mughal Rule not only regained their independence but established their predominance in the country shows the vitality of the Hindu race.

THE POST OFFICE IN INDIA[1]

Is the torrent in spate? He must ford it or swim,
Has the rain wrecked the road? He must climb by the cliff.
The service admits not a but, nor an if,
While breath's in his mouth, he must bear without fail,
In the name of the Emperor, "the Overland Mail."

RUDYARD KIPLING.

I MUST thank you for affording me an opportunity to study the conditions in which the Post Office works in India, and thus enable me to do my duty by a large section of my constituents. For, when I received an invitation from you to preside at this fifth session of the Central Circle Postal and R. M. S. Conference, I looked upon the proposal as a call to duty and not as an honour proposed to be done to me. As the representative of Ajmer-Merwara in the Legislative Assembly of India, it is my duty not only to understand and appreciate the work done by this department with such a meritorious record of service of public utility, but to interest myself in the welfare of a class of public workers who deserve all the sympathy and support that may be given to them, as well as to help in getting justice done to them. Thus by calling upon me to take part in your deliberations today, you have given me an opportunity to do my duty towards the public; for, no agency works for the public in the way the Post Office does. You are, therefore, not beholden to me for any slight service

[1] Presidential address delivered at the fifth Session of the Central Circle Postal and R. M. S. Conference at Ajmer on 19, May, 1929 A. D.

I may be able to render to the cause you are fighting for, but have enabled me to discharge a part of my public duty.

Gentlemen, though the Post Office is the most essential and therefore the most valued of the utility services in any country, it is an unfortunate fact, that in our country it is treated with a want of consideration and a lack of justice that would probably not be tolerated elsewhere. The Post Office touches at so many points the daily life of every man and woman in the land, high and low, poor and rich, living in the town or in the country, that it is the interest of every one to see that contentment and a sense of satisfaction prevails in the rank and file of this most useful branch of public service, so that it may be able, in the fullest degree, to contribute its quota towards public good. Speaking of the service, Dr. Nandlal, presiding at the Rawalpindi Conference, said: "The Postal Department is the ear and the eye of the public. The commercial, social and political progress of the country is due, as in other countries, to this service to a great extent." People have become so thoroughly accustomed to the wonderful facilities provided by the post office in securing the daily amenities of civilized life of modern times, that they regard as matters of course and nothing extraordinary, the marvellous results yielded by a combination of trained intelligence, skill, patience, thought, diligence and devotion contributed by these servants of humanity in making the present high standard of life possible. If we gave a little thought to the various steps taken by these devoted workers to achieve the present cumulative wonderful result, and consider how we would fare if we were deprived of the service daily rendered by the post office at the present time, as also how all business would come to a standstill, and how anxious and miserable we would feel for want of news of those

who are near and dear to us; how we would want those small and little cared for things which make life worth living in modern conditions; if all this is even visualized, the most cynical amongst us will soon appreciate the over-whelming importance of the work done by the Post Office, and become conscious of the gratitude we owe to a succession of devoted workers, whose imagination and powers of organization, sense of duty and public spirit, have made the Post Office such a necessary part of present day life. Sir Arthur Fanshawe, a former Director-General of the Post Office in India rightly said, that "no department of Government was more than the Post Office to the natives of India."

It is a matter of gratification that the members of the Postal service—a service which has played such an important part in the evolution of civilized life and which is justly proud of having rendered inestimable service to the people and the Government—are endowed with a laudable sense of responsibility and duty to Government, which they have not allowed to be obscured though they have received less than justice at its hands and have often been treated with unmerited hardship. In all its sufferings and its injustices, the Service as a whole has never swerved from its path of stedfast loyalty to Government. It is fully cognizant of the fact that loyalty and honest work are its chief assets, and will in the long run bring it justice and prosperity. It also realises that it is not free to employ the weapons which ordinarily the sufferers may legitimately employ to secure their rights and obtain fulfilment of their just claims. It recognises and accepts the limitations and restrictions under which Government servants, however keenly they may feel the unjust and sometimes cruel treatment meted out to them, have got to work to have the wrongs wittingly or unwittingly done them, righted. You

are of course fully conscious of the fact that those who control the working of the Postal Department gain no personal profit by keeping you ill-paid and hard worked. And then, they suffer no harm by your refusal to work. The adoption of coercive measures, therefore, is out of question in your case. Fortunately, both the Government and the public know that the means and methods adopted by you to have your grievances redressed are what servants should employ to gain the goodwill of their masters—hard, honest, loyal work and a respectful, true and restrained presentation of your case for consideration. We, therefore, hope that Government would also appreciate this self-restraint which makes the workers of the Service patiently suffer the arrows and slings of fortune and the indifference and want of thought of those who are at the head of affairs, rather than do anything to embarass them, and, in future, show greater sympathy with the rank and file of the Service, and a readiness to redress their just grievances.

Government are no doubt aware that there are many just grievances from which the Service suffers. A perusal of the minimum demands submitted by the authorised spokesmen of the Service would show that they are very modest, and should be granted. It is unnecessary for me to discuss their merits, but I must state here a few of them which merit immediate consideration and redress.

Take the case of the Postmen. They are the feet of the service, the lowest in the scale and yet its greatest strength. It is the postman, that constantly reminds the public of the existence of this most essential service, and is the symbol of its glory. To the poor and the needy, to the toiling millions, to the common folk, it is the inferior staff of Government Departments that symbolize the might and majesty of Government; and yet what a difference between the

subordinate staff of the Post Office and the other Services! The Court Process-server, the Police constable, the Excise peon, the Income-tax chaprasi are all feared, disliked and shunned, while the postman is welcomed everywhere. In the villages, as in towns, people look forward to his visits and anxiously await his appearance. They greet him when he comes; while a police constable or a chaprasi of the departments mentioned above scares people away and spreads fear and distrust. The postman represents the beneficent aspect of the Government and adds to its popularity and strength; and is, therefore, deserving of special consideration. As a rule he is helpful, kindly and courteous.

And if you look at him a little closely, he is a wonderful phenomenon, and his work is amazing. The Postal Committee's Report of 1920 says:—"To be qualified for his work, the postman must have knowledge of the script of at least two languages, one being English. His duties involve considerable pecuniary responsibility. He is in fact in a small way a cashier; valuables and cash are entrusted to him. He has to render a daily account, to furnish security and to make good losses...The efficiency of the Postal service very largely depends upon the postman." Sir Geoffrey Clarke, in his book, "The Post Office of India and its Story," speaking of the postmen, says: "The articles received by the postmen often form a strange medley in many languages......In a large town, letters are received addressed in as many as a dozen different languages." Then he has to know all the lanes and byelanes of the locality in which he works. He has, in large towns and cities, to go up to the second and third storey of a house, and has to walk about eight hours a day. He has to deliver V. P. articles and money orders and, as Sir G. Clarke says, "The postman has to bear the brunt in case of the indentification not

being complete, and his responsibility in the matter is great Large sums are entrusted daily to men on small pay. He is admittedly one of the most important factors in the department and upon his energy and honesty much depends."

The lot of the village postmen is hard indeed. "He has to visit villages in his beat once or twice every week. He opens letter boxes, receives articles for despatch, delivers letters, registered and insured articles, money orders, value payable articles etc. He has to sell stamps and quinine. In fact, he is a kind of perambulating branch office." He often has to close bags. He has to sleep in any village he happens to be in at nightfall, keeping his money and articles with him. He has to walk fifteen to twenty-five miles in his round according as he returns from it in two or three days. He is never sure of his meals, though in this hospitable country he is never allowed to starve. And yet what does a postman get? Does he get a "living wage"? Is he able to live a decent life, in health and strength to perform his duties during a normal period of life, provide sufficient nourishing food and proper clothes for his children, give them the rudiments of education secure a sanitary house with sufficient accommodation, pay for medical aid, meet the marriage and other social expenses and save sufficient money for contingencies. Have Government considered what his requirements are, and what useful service he renders? The 1920 Revision fixed his salary at the magnificent sum of Rs. 18 a month, rising, to Rs. 24 in 24 years by annual increments of annas 4. Rs. 18 a month! In Berar, a field-labourer gets Rs. 1/8 a day or Rs. 45 a month. Even in Rajputana, a day labourer, illiterate and unskilled, gets -/12/- a day or Rs. 22/8/- p.m., in a town, though in a village he often gets Re. 1/- a day. A village postman could not rise beyond Rs. 22/-. As a result of years of agitation and petitioning, the

benign Government have been pleased to fix his salary at Rs. 18-1-38. It cannot think of giving the postman more than -/9/5 a day, when he starts service. The service demands Rs. 30-0-60. Is a salary of Rs. 30 rising to Rs. 60 in 30 years not a modest demand, considering the literacy and other qualifications a postman is required to possess, and the arduous duties he is made to perform? I consider that for the work he does, Rs. 30 a month is a very moderate salary, and the demand, minimum as it has been rightfully termed, errs on the side of modesty. It speaks volumes in favour of the intelligence, the honesty, the high sense of duty that an Indian postman possesses that there are so few cases of misappropriation or defalcation amongst them. The Chief Justice of Madras, while giving judgment in a case against a postman, observed: "I have listened with astonishment to the evidence about the system in which these matters are done, a system by which a man on Rs 23 a month is actually entrusted with a sum of Rs. 1200 to go about and distribute it broadcast over a quarter of Madras. I have said before and I say it again that I think it is putting altogether monstrous temptations in the way of men of small salaries. I do not think that the salary is in any way commensurate with the burden of trust imposed." A stronger condemnation from a more competent authority in the matter, could hardly be met with of the niggardly, I had almost said cruel, system, which takes advantage of the poverty and helplessness of the people, sweats their labour, and makes them work without giving them a living wage.

You will realise the stinginess shown by Government to postmen in India when you compare them with their confreres in England In England, a postman starts on a salary of Rs. 175 a month and rises to Rs. 304-8 after 13 years. In Rajputana, he starts on Rs. 18 and rises in 20 years to Rs. 38. Till two years

ago, he could not rise beyond Rs. 24.

The case of Postal Runners is, if possible, worse. They are no doubt a class of illiterate people and their work does not require much intelligence. But the physical labour they have to put in and the risks they have to run, must be taken into account. They have often to risk their lives. Innured as they are to hard living, they have no prospects in life. They know no comforts and know no future. A runner has to cross jungles and hills infested with tigers and other wild animals. He has to run in dark nights, in pouring rain and in the broiling heat of the sun, and has been known to lay down his life fighting with robbers to protect his mail bags. He has to ford flooded rivers, and cross swamps. Unknown numbers of them have lost their lives doing their duty. The heroism with which a postman serves the public and the State is unique and exacts admiration. He defies rain; defies the sun. He braves danger and darkness, fords rivers and climbs hills.

And how is he treated by Government? He is now, after the 1927 revision, allowed a salary of Rs. 13 a month rising by annual increments of As. 4 each, to Rs. 18. Is this justice?

The revision of salaries of postal employees done in 1927 A. D has in some case been reactionary and unfair. In 1920 A. D., the salary of a mail guard was fixed at Rs. 24-1-32. The Post Office Deputation demanded that it be raised to Rs. 40-2-60. Those responsible for the Revision of 1927 have had the grace to reduce the starting salary of a mail guard from Rs. 24 to Rs. 18! The Revision has given no relief to mail peons, packers and practically none to van peons and others. Mail guards who were classed with Overseers and Branch Postmasters before the revision are now classed with postmen.

Speaking from his presidential chair, the Hon'ble

Mr. Khaparde, President of the last year's Conference declared that in "the recent revision of pays of the clerical cadre, absolutely nothing was given to the postmen, village postmen, runners, R. M. S. Sorters, Branch Postmasters, Overseers etc." And yet these are the people who stand most in need of relief and to whom relief is more than overdue.

Take the case of Branch Postmasters. As a rule, capable and experienced postmen are made Branch Postmasters. After long service as postmen, they become Branch Postmasters, generally towards the end of their service. Starting on minimum salary, they take eleven years to reach the maximum. As a matter of fact, they rarely reach the maximum. Leaving aside the question of higher salaries, the yearly increment in their case should be so regulated that they may all have an opportunity of enjoying the maximum for some years before they retire. If a man joins service as a postman at Rs. 20 and retires at Rs. 55, he ought to be able to reach the maximum as Branch Postmaster at Rs. 50 if the promotion is to do him real good. As he becomes a Branch Postmaster after several years service as postman, the period which would take him to the maximum must not be very long.

The case of postal clerks also deserves Government's favourable notice. The Postal Committee of 1920 say: "The conditions of service of postal clerks differ very much from those of an ordinary clerk in a Government office. Their hours of work are longer and much more irregular, beginning in some cases at 5 a. m. and ending as late as 10 p m. They get no holidays to speak of, and they have considerable pecuniary responsibilities. The Member for Labour and Industries, Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra, stated in a meeting at Simla in 1920 A. D.: "On the other hand, in the Postal department clerical service is unpopular and the duties are harder than those of ordinary clerical

establishment." Considering these conditions of service, the starting pay of Rs. 80 a month for graduate clerks demanded by the postal Deputation and of Rs. 70 for I.A. and 60 for others is reasonable, but the Government has only granted them Rs. 55, 45 and 35, respectively.

Another relief to be given is the raising of the proportion of selection grade appointments to 20 per cent, as even in the Telegraph Department, the proportion is 18 per cent. Proper reserves should be kept in places where it is not done for clerks and postmen, who are as human as other men and who have to go off duty owing to sickness or urgent work. Head clerks of Superintendents of post offices may also be allowed duty allowance as they have to do the work of Superintendents when the latter go on tour.

Ill-paid as they are, the postal clerks are always over worked. There is no standard to judge of the strength of the establishment in Divisional offices. A standard should be laid down for them as well as for the postmen. There should be a time test. Insufficient time is allowed to R. M. S. sorters and the Divisional office clerks to do the work assigned to them. It is however a pity, that postmen were excluded from the investigations that have been made by Mr. Bewoor, I.C.S., who was specially deputed for the purpose.

Another matter of some importance is that the inferior servants of the post office get leave on half pay, and never on full pay. This defect in service regulations should be removed and leave on full pay should be allowed to this deserving class of postal servants.

Then, these people do not get more than Rs. 6 a month as pension. This amount was fixed at a time when the pay of a servant was Rs. 8 a month. And it is only fair that, when the scale of pay has risen and has become double or treble of what it was in old days, the amount of pension should also be proportionately increased.

An important matter which causes hardship to its

employees, and is therefore causing grave discontent in the Postal department, is the unfair discrimination between the employees of the Postal and the Telegraph departments, which are both branches of the same service and under the same head. In the Telegraph Department, a Telegraphist starts on Rs. 75 per month and has since been recommended to do so on Rs. 80, while a postal clerk even if a graduate, starts on only Rs. 55. Even the Telegraph Committee of 1920 A. D. admit that the work in the Department does not require higher intelligence while it certainly entails less responsibility. Higher and better conditions of service prevail in the Telegraph than in the Postal Service. The latter is treated as an inferior one. No such distinction exists in England. Postal work requires wider knowledge, higher intelligence, greater tact, care and diligence, and a higher sense of responsibility. You often find in it men of far higher education than in the Telegraph department, and yet the latter is treated as the favourite wife. The reason apparently is political. But if discontent is to be removed and a spirit of justice and fairness is to pervade in the combined service which is necessary to maintain the high standard of work put forth up to now and keep up the high traditions of this great service, this unjust discrimination must come to an end.

The justice of most of the grievances of the Postal department, numerous as they are, is, fortunately for its employees, admitted by the authorities that control their official destinies. The one reason, however, they always advance in defence of their *non possumous* attitude in the matter is that fresh taxation will have to be levied to find money to redress the grievances of the postal employees. This is wholly untrue. The post office is an earning department and a large amount of the earnings is saved year after year after meeting the expenses of the Post Office. But the savings are

used for purpose other than postal, for which there is no justification whatever. Mr. N. M. Joshi, the Labour member of the Legislative Assembly, speaking during the budget debate of 1927 A. D., declared: "The Government of India are making huge profits out of the Postal department. They make losses on the other two departments, the Telegraph and the Telephone. Last year's profit on the Postal Department was 21 lakhs and every year before there has been a profit of 20 lakhs or 25 lakhs or 30 lakhs." This, though Government profess, as Sir Geoffrey Clarke says, that " the Post Office has never been regarded as a revenue producing department." *What a contrast between profession and fact?* If this large amount of twenty to thirty lakhs a year were not arbitrarily used by Government on a non-postal department, there would always be available money sufficient to enable Government to redress all the grievances of the Postal Department and to spare. Thus, the money earned by the postman and his fellow workers by their own exertions and work is used by Government for the benefit of others. And it is very like adding insult to injury, when Government say that the grievances of the Post Office cannot be redressed for want of money. If Government could be persuaded to give up this policy of feeding the Telegraph Department on the earnings of the Postal Department, there is no doubt that the happy day would dawn when contentment would reign in the Postal Department.

There is of course no lack of lip sympathy on the part of the highest authorities of the Postal Department with the employees. The Honourable Sir Bhupendra Nath Mitra, who has done much in helping the cause of the subordinates in the Departments under him, stated in the Assembly in 1926 A. D., that he had examined the grievances of the Postal employees personally in all their varied aspects, and had done all

he could *within his resources*. It is thus clear that if all your grievances have not been removed by him, it is because a higher authority has imposed conditions on him under which he is helpless. But in this very declaration of his, there is a ray of hope and I feel sure that a time will soon come when the justice of your demands will prevail, and your just grievances will be redressed. And here I must invite the attention of the Government to the declaration of the Finance Member of the Government of India made in 1866 A.D.:—"The Post Office is so potent an engine of civilization that no Government would be justified in allowing fiscal considerations to stand in the way of its improvement."

In concluding my address, gentlemen, I must draw your attention to a matter of importance, and ask you all to give serious attention to it. In order to command attention to your demands, you must be able to place them before Government as the corporate opinion of the Postal and R. M. S. as a whole. The demands, whether they affect the Postal or the R. M. S., must be put forth in the name of the united Service. In the interests of solidarity, the Unions representing different grades and cadres such as Postmen, Inspectors, Circle office clerks should be merged into one all India Union. The formation of a Town Inspectors Association and Government's recognition of it is to be regretted as encouraging fissiparous tendencies exhibited by some classes of Postal service. All members of the Postal Service including the R. M. S. must recognise that their common interests, as well as the interests of the various cadres, will be infinitely better served by all of them joining one all-embracing Union representing the entire Service, and that their cause will be hopelessly weakened by various cadres forming separate Unions. I draw the particular attention of the Railway Mail Service to this matter and ask them to join the All-India Union in larger numbers.

SWADESHI[1]

Where Science, Art and Labour have outpour'd
Their myriad horns of plenty at our feet.

TENNYSON, *Ode for the opening of the International Exhibition*, London.

IT is my privilege to offer you, Hon'ble Col. Ogilvie, on behalf of the Dayanand Nirvana Ardha Shatabdi Sabha, a warm welcome here. I tender you our grateful thanks for so kindly accepting our request to open this All India Swadeshi Industrial Exhibition, organised under the auspices of the Dayanand Nirvana Ardha Shatabdi Sabha. We are fully conscious of the honour and kindness you are doing us to-day, for we know that you have specially come all the way from Mount Abu to open this Exhibition and that you are going back tomorrow.

You hold one of the most responsible positions in the Government of this country. You are the highest political authority in this great and historic province of Rajputna—a piece of territory much larger than Great Britain and Ireland combined, and inhabited by the ancient and honoured Rajput races, the glorious Gehlots, the chivalrous Chauhans, the valiant Rathors, the clever Kachhwahas, the respected Yadvas with their chequered history, representing the entire Rajput chivalry, and including this province of Ajmer which has played a part in the history of India second to none. Responsible as you are for the welfare and prosperity of so many diverse communities

[1]Speech delivered as President of the All India Swadeshi Industrial Exhibition Committee, at the opening of the Exhibition at Ajmer on 13, October, 1933 A.D.

and interests involving arduous duties and engrossing cares, demanding careful consideration of questions of far-reaching importance which the present critical times in the history of this country continually press themselves on your attention, necessitating constant vigilance, unremitting attention and manifold engagements, it is so good of you to have been able to find time to come to Ajmer from the Parnassus of India to open this Exhibition. This not only illustrates the saying of the great Italian statesman of the nineteenth century, Cavour, that whenever he wished to get anything done, he always went to the busy man, for the idle men never have time to do anything, but also proves conclusively how responsive you are to the reasonable wishes and requests of the people to help them.

Swadeshi ought to be as much a concern of the Government as of the people. Swadeshi, in the ultimate connotation of the term, means nothing more than the fundamental economic interests of the people. It means the material well-being of the people, resulting in their happiness and contentment. The Swadeshi we are advocating is a purely economic matter, and the encouragement of Swadeshi industry means the economic development of India by fostering Indian industry.

It has often been alleged by people ignorant of Indian history that India has always been an agricultural country, and that agriculture has been the principal occupation of the bulk of the people of India. This is a mis-representation of facts. India was in old days a highly advanced Industrial country, though agriculture too, owing to the natural advantages it enjoys, and owing to its frugal and industrial population reached a high degree of development. The gifts which nature has lavished with both hands on this great country, in the shape of

its wonderful mineral resources, its enormous fertile tracts, its great rivers and sheets of water, immense forests and its salubrious climate enabled its people not only to make great progress in scientific agriculture, but to achieve amazing results—amazing for those days—in industrial development and in the arts. "Art", says Col. Tod, "seems to have exhausted itself in India." One of the greatest art critics in England, Mr. E. B. Havell, in his "Indian Sculpture and Painting" (p. 24) after describing the spiritual character of the Hindus and the meaning they understood of the winds which swept through the forest trees, the waters which poured down from the Heaven-built Himalayas, the power and beauty of the rising and the setting sun, the radiant light and heat of mid-day, the glories of the Eastern moonlit nights, the majestic gathering of the monsoon clouds, the fury of the cyclone, the lightning flash and thunder and the cheerful dripping of the life-giving rain, says: "From this devout communion with nature in all the marvellous diversity of her tropical moods, came the inspiration of an art possessing richness of imagery and wealth of elaboration which seems bewildering and annoying to our dull Northern ways of thinking."

"India", says the *Encylopædia Britannica*, "was once the seat of commerce." The author of *Ancient and Mediæval India* says, "the Hindus have ever been a commercial people". Now how can a people be commercial unless its industries are in a flourishing state. Would the English, the Americans and the Japanese be commercial people if their own industries had not been in a prosperous state?

The Hindus were also a maritime people. Their ships in old days were to be found in every part of Europe, Egypt and Asia. They were great ship-builders. Prof. Max Duncker's *History of Antiquity*

and Mukerji's *Indian Shipping* show that the Hindus were the greatest ship-builders in the old world. Indian muslins and Indian silk were sold in every great city of Europe. "It (silk) sold for its weight in gold" in Rome, says the *Encyclopædia Britannica.* The elder Pliny complained that there was no year in which India did not drain the Roman Empire of a hundred million sesterces. He adds that a sum equivalent to £4,000,000 was annually remitted by the Romans alone to pay for their investments, and that in the reign of the Ptolemies, 125 sails of Indian shipping were at one time lying in the ports of Egypt, Syria and Rome.

Not in the products of the loom alone did India excel. The celebrated Damascus blades, says Manning, have been traced to the workshops of India. It is the considered opinion of Industrial chemists that India produced as good steel in old days, as Europe does now. It was because of its manufactures that India accumulated vast wealth, of which Milton sings in the opening lines of the second book of *Paradise Lost.*

I have said enough to show that in old days, Indians were an Industrial people and Indian manufactures were sold in all countries of the world. India was an exporting country, and the products of its industries sold in every market in Europe, Egypt, China, Persia and the East Indies. It remained the centre of world trade till about two centuries ago. It is only since the advent of the *machine* that Indian industries have been destroyed and India has ceased to be a manufacturing country. The past, however, shows the possibilities of the future and potentialities of progress.

The object of this Exhibition, as of all genuine Exhibitions in this country, is to encourage industrial development and to bring to the knowledge of the people the products of Indian industry.

But the twentieth century world is a new world altogether. The destiny of the nations is governed not by individuals now as was the case in old days, but by the bulk of the populations themselves. The State represents the people, the nation, the country in a much truer sense now than it ever did before. The State, as the term is understood in Europe, America and at least in some parts of Asia, is an embodiment of the people, the muscle and the brain of the entire populace It has therefore become increasingly necessary that the State should be at the back of the industries of the country. With the annihilation of distances owing to the rail-road, the motor car, the aeroplane and the telegraph, the Government of a country has become for the first time in the history of the world, the deciding factor in its industrial development; and, it has, therefore, become essential that Government should not only fully support the industries of the country but should make such support one of its chief concerns.

Every country requires manufactured goods for its use. And as manufactures mean money, every advanced country now a days tries to manufacture goods in mass for consumption in other countries, The other countries have therefore every right to protect their own manufactures. They are entitled to try and produce goods at a cheaper cost and it behoves the Governments of those countries to take all possible steps to help their people to develop industries and themselves produce goods, which they import from other countries.

The three chief factors in production are men, material, and machinery—in other words, capital, labour, raw material, technical knowledge and mechanical equipment. India has abundance of raw material and cheap labour. What it lacks is technical knowledge and mechanical facilities. And

it is the duty of the Government of India to provide schools, technical institutes, laboratories and workshops to give its people, technical knowledge and practical training to enable it to produce goods of high quality to be able to compete with foreign manufactures. I am glad to say that the Government of India is not unmindful of what has to be done in this respect.

The Indian Finance Commission of 1880 and the Education Commission of 1884 A D. invited the attention of the Government of India to the necessity of promoting technical education. Sir John Hewett. the Lt.-Governor of the U. P. speaking at the Industrial Conference held by the Government in 1907 A.D. said, "The question of technical and industrial education has been before the Government and the public for over 20 years. There is probably no subject on which more has been written and said, while less has been accomplished."

The question of Industrial education has been discussed since then by the Indian Industrial Commission of 1916-18, the Calcutta University Commission of 1917-19, the Technical and Industrial Education Committee of 1921-22. All these committees have made useful recommendations.

The agriculturists of India are out of work for five or six months out of the twelve. These masses of people can only be absorbed, either in large industrial concerns or get employment in cottage industries. India has always been a country of cottage industries. The advent of the *machine* driven by power destroyed the cottage industries of India and reduced it to a purely agricultural country. But the machine has come to India too, and with its help, India is rapidly becoming an industrial country again.

It is a matter of gratification that Government have of late given proper attention to protection of

Indian industries. Not only have the cotton excise duties, the most indefensible of taxes, been abolished, but Government is consistently pursuing the policy of rational protection and has taken measures to protect the indigenous industries of India. The iron and steel industry has been protected. The textile industry, the greatest industry of India, has been protected to a great extent. Paper, match and a host of small industries have been given protection. The Indian Tariff Board investigates all cases of Indian industry which claim or require protection, and the Government as advised by it, takes prompt measures to afford protection to industries. I will give you only two instances to show what Government are doing in the matter now. India was the first country in the world to produce cotton and sugar, and yet it is India which has for some time been importing from other countries the bulk of the sugar and the cotton cloth it consumes. Thanks, however, to the action recently taken by Government a large number of sugar factories have been opened and sugar produced in India has displaced Java, Mauritius and beet sugar in the Indian market.

When Japan began to dump cotton cloth in India, and helped by bounties, subsidies and other commercial devices began to sell it under cost price in this country, Government denounced its commercial agreement with Japan. This has made the way clear for Government to levy protective duties on Japanese imports into India. Japan, appreciating the significance of this action of the Government of India, and also afraid lest it might lose its most valuable market, is now negotiating for some agreement, which, while satisfying the legitimate claims of Indian manufactures, may not completely bar Japanese imports into India. The action taken by Government in these two cases has been most beneficial to India

and shows that Government now is not unmindful of the economic interests of the people of this country. Such being the attitude of Government, it now behoves the people and the princes of India to devote their attention to improving the industries of the country. For this purpose, Exhibitions of Indian Industries should be held periodically in all important towns to stimulate industrial effort and to revive lost or dormant Indian art. Permanent Shows displaying Indian manufactures and products of art should be established in all provincial centres, where art and manufactures of the province should be brought to the knowledge of all and sundry. Japan has set an admirable example in this respect. Japan has got a permanent show of her manufactures in Calcutta. Her enterprise is marvellous and extorts admiration.

The princes and the people of Rajputana should devote special attention to Art and Industry, and I hope and trust this Exhibition will direct the attention of the people of Rajputana to the necessity of a co-operative effort on their part to improve the arts and industries of this great and historic province.

There are nearly three hundred stalls besides open spaces. The demand for participation in this Exhibition by merchants and industrialists has been unprecedented, and as such we have been forced to accommodate them wherever space could be found. This has no doubt cramped the little open spaces that were left after the heavy rains of this year, but as the traders have come from long distances, as far south as Trivandrum and Mysore and as far east as Calcutta and Dacca, we could not but find room for them at the last moment.

Every trade and industry, we claim, is represented in this Exhibition. On the one hand, you will find some of the new mills selling their products which vie in fineness of texture with Lancashire goods, on the other, you will see in the Khadi Court, spinners

of Andhra Desh spinning by their old Charkha finer counts than the Mills have yet succeeded in producing.

India is famous for enamel and inlaying work and we have succeeded, by the participation of the U. P. Arts and Crafts Emporium, in securing practical demonstration of these arts by experts some of whom have won admiration in the British Empire Exhibition of Wembly and the International Exhibition of Paris of 1931 A. D.

The big clock on the main gate of the Exhibition is also of Indian make with all its component parts, and those who have used such clocks praise their correctness of time and durability. The manufacturers, Swadeshi Electric Clock Co of Bombay are to be congratulated for this rare manufacture which deserves all encouragement and patronage.

You will further see in the Exhibition the actual manufacture by Poona artists of glass bangles and other glassware which were uptil now the monoply of Japan. Our Health, Hygiene, and Educational Court is also unique as it contains models illustrative of consequences of neglect of ordinary sanitary precautions. Through the efforts of the students of the Dacca Engineering College, we have succeeded in getting some plans for ideal homes of which we have shown wooden models. This is also a feature which is new to this Exhibition. We are indebted to the Ahmedabad Sanitary Association for the loan of their Sanitary models.

I deem it my duty here to express my deep gratitude to Major G. L. Betham, M. C., Commissioner, Ajmer-Merwara for the unstinted help he has given us to make this Exhibition a success. He has been very generous with his help and there is no request which we made and he did not grant.

I now request you, Sir, to open the Exhibition.

DAYALBAGH INDUSTRIES[1]

> In every rank, or great or small
> 'Its industry supports us all.
>
> GRAY.

I must tender you, Hon'ble Colonel Ogilvie, my grateful thanks and the thanks of the Exhibition Committee for taking the trouble to come all the way from Mount Abu to Ajmer to do us the honour of opening our Exhibition.

The function of to-day is a unique one, not only in its setting, but also because of the unique character of the conception and the achievement of the enterprise represented by the exhibits here. This function is being celebrated to-day in a place of exquisite beauty, hallowed by memories at once sweet and sad and recalling to mind the hoary traditions of the last Hindu Empire in India as well as the might of the Mughal Empire. As we stand on the historic embankment of Ānasagar, the imagination takes wings and the mind flies, not only to the great exploits of the Chauhan King Ānadeva whose memory will ever remain enshrined in the beauties of the Anasagar lake, but begins to revel in the glories of the Emperor Visaldeva and of his nephew, the celebrated Prithviraj Chauhan, "the flower of Rajput chivalry", whose life was one great romance ending in the romantic love of Sanyogta and the fateful battle fields of Panipat and Thaneswar. More than seven centuries have passed, but the sun of his fame still shines brilliantly in the firmament of Rajputana. The splendour of his exploits, sung in every home in this province lights up the pages of history.

[1]Speech delivered as Chairman of the Dayalbagh Industries Exhibition Committee at the opening of the Exhibition at Ajmer on 14, October, 1933 A. D.



ANA SAGAR LAKE AJMER TARAGARH IN THE BACK GROUND

Those venerable old trees and the ruins just below this terrace carry the mind to the scenes where Jahangir and his beloved consort, Nur Jahan, (Light of the World), passed three years in Ajmer often enjoying in the transports of love, the cool breezes wafted on the laughing waters of this beautiful lake.

The ruins to the right, as we go down the road leading to Qaisarbagh, remind us of Jahangir's palaces, in one of which the ambassador of King James II, Sir Thomas Roe, was entertained by Jalaluddin Hassan, the Turk Governor of Bihar. Sir Thomas Roe gives interesting descriptions of the palace, its paintings and the pictures in it. He also gives a quaint description of the storm of rain in the Anasagar that occurred on the 20th of August, 1616 A. D., the consternation it caused in the camp of Prince Khurram (afterwards Shahjahan) and other nobles, the abandonment by them of their homes, and the alarm it caused to the English ambassador.

The marble pavilions, perfect gems of art, glittering in the lingering rays of the setting sun slowly sinking behind the Nag Pahar as if unwilling to leave the soul-satisfying scene like a lover his love, but compelled to say *au revoir* every evening to the Anasagar, remind us of the magnificence of the reign of Emperor Shah Jahan, the ravishing beauty of whose buildings in Ajmer, Delhi, Agra and other places are standing monuments of his artistic genius.

The beauty of the scene when the sun sinks behind the Nag Pahar while his rays dissolve into all the hues of the rainbow as they strike the crystal waters of Ana's Lake fills the mind with ecstatic delight and rapture. Once seen, it is never forgotten.

Standing on the balcony in front of the marble pavilion surveying the enchanting scene, one is reminded of the beautiful lines, with which the most lovable of the English poets, Lord Byron, opens his

Curse of Minerva; and which if we substitute "The Nāgpahr" for "Morea's" aptly describe the scene:

> Slow sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
> Along the Nagpahr hills the setting sun;
> Not, as in northren climes, obscurely bright,
> But one unclouded blaze of living light;
> Over the hushed deep the yellow beam he throws,
> Gilds the green wave that trembles as it glows;

Such is the setting of today's function.

The Dayalbagh Industries, the products of which form the exhibits kept in those twenty stalls inviting inspection, are the result of the constructive effort of a great personality, applying itself to the solution of a problem, which is the theme of discussion everywhere in India and which touches the lives of the millions who inhabit this great country That personality is the Sahabji Maharaj, the head of the Radhasoami Satsang with its headquarters at Agra. He is the fifth Guru or leader of the Satsang. The headquarters of the Satsang, which before his time were of a peripatetic nature, were given a permanent home by him at Dayalbagh which he founded with the eye of a seer. The little place of four *bighas* which constituted the Dayalbagh in January, 1915 has expanded in 1933, A. D. into a colony covering an area of nearly 3000 acres and containing a population of 3000 souls. The colony has beautiful roads, avenues of shady trees, playgrounds, fountains, flower gardens, electric supply and water works of its own, and lime and brick kilns. It has its Municipality and its own Bank. It has a small "League of Service" of men and women. It has its own forest in another province to supply timber and other forest produce. It has a large printing press of its own, which issues three Papers, the English *Dayalbagh Herald* and the Urdu and Hindi *Prem Pracharak*, besides other literature.

There is an Arts College and a Technical College, and

boys and girls high schools with boarding houses, and there is a hospital. Dayalbagh contains a dairy, one of the finest in India, with up-to-date equipment.

Not content with giving spiritual guidance to the increasing numbers of the Radhasoami Satsang, the Sahabji Maharaj felt the necessity of providing for the Satsang, and, through the Satsang, for the people outside the Satsang, avenues of profitable employment of time and energy by establishing industries. *No great community which lives only on spiritual food can live long and survive the buffet of time.* The body as well as the mind requires nourishment. With the foresight and wisdom of a born leader, Sahabji Maharaj conceived the idea of combining an industrial outlook on life with the spiritual development of his followers, thus ministering to the mind as well as to the body. And he has achieved marvellous success in his undertaking. Starting in 1917 with a small workshop at a cost of Rs. 4,000, the Dayalbagh Model Industries have during the last fifteen years made wonderful progress and have developed into a unique institution containing large leather works, iron and steel works, textile factories and wood workshops. And when we consider that there are no capitalists at the back to finance these undertakings, the whole thing appears to be a marvellous achievement.

I had the pleasure of paying a visit to this colony last year and was greatly impressed and struck by the thorough orderliness, peace and cleanliness of the place and by the devotional attitude and the spirit of service animating the lives and activities of its inhabitants.

It is a matter of gratification and delight that the Founder and organiser, the brain behind the "Model Industries," whose hands hold the strings of this great enterprise and who is also the spiritual head of the Satsang, is present here amongst us to-day.

I ask you now, Sir, to open this Exhibition.

BENGAL REGULATION III OF 1818[1]

Their country conquers with their martyrdom
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.

BYRON, *Sonnet to Chillon.*

I rise to support the motion to repeal Regulation III of 1818. This Regulation should have been repealed long ago. Its continued existence on the Statute-book of India redounds to the credit of no one. It is no credit to Government that after hundred years of British rule—during which period, the Government claim that this country, inhabited by a not ungrateful people, has been making steady and rapid progress in moral and material prosperity—the situation is the same as a century ago when Government thought it necessary to forge a weapon to enable it to deport people without trial; and it is no credit to the people who claim that they are fit for self-government that they should have failed to convince the Government that they have advanced far beyond the stage when such arbitrary and autocratic measures were necessary to keep peace and order.

This Regulation, in its conception, is a negation of justice, a negation of the natural rights of a human being. When a country or a nation is in the throes of a war, when all its energies and resources are employed in repelling a foreign invasion, and no distraction in the shape of keeping the internal peace should be permitted, measures like these may be justified and

[1]Speech delivered on 20 March, 1924 A.D. in the Legislative Assembly, New Delhi.

may even be necessary. But when a country is at peace with its neighbours, when it is in the enjoyment of friendly relations with foreign powers, the retention of such measures on the Statute-book is nothing but an arrogation of power that rightfully belongs to no one, and which can only be exercised in defiance and derogation of Right and Reason

This Regulation III of 1818 was framed, Sir, when the whole of Upper India, including the Punjab, Sind, the United Provinces and Oudh was under the rule of Indian Rulers. The Regulation is reminiscent of the days when another European Power and its agents had not quite given up running a race with the British for supermacy in India. It was framed at a time when the British military power and British diplomacy had not finally vindicated themselves in the country. It was framed when foreign adventurers and free-lances without a stake in the country were harassing the land, and the Pindari freebooters and the Thugs—those pests of society—were infesting the land, murdering the weak, plundering the rich, and terrorising all. It was framed at a time when the Ruling Powers of India were flowing into a melting pot, when peace was unknown, trade was at its lowest ebb, and money and metal had burrowed themselves underground: when the one desire of all India was peace, riddance from unscrupulous adventurers and merciless marauders and a settled Government from one end of the country to the other. The Regulation was framed in those days to be helpful in achieving this universal desire. This desideratum has long been reached. There has long been a settled Government in the land: the country has long been enjoying peace. For the Government still to cling to obsolete measures, and to hug to the heart out of date weapons suited to the troublous times of the early days of British rule is really to confess that they have failed to win the confidence and the attachment

of the people even after a hundred years' effort; that the peace that exists in the land is not the peace of contentment and satisfaction, but a peace imposed on the country because one party is too strong and the other too weak. Such a belief, if generally prevalent—it would be a wrong belief and I believe it is not generally prevalent, for India has in every respect travelled far beyond the conditions existent in 1818—such a belief would be destructive of good will between the two parties, and would not make for prosperity in the present or progress in the future. Moreover, for Government to proclaim on the one hand that their goal is responsible Government which pre-supposes their confidence in the sense and the intellectual and moral capabilities of the people, and on the other hand, to declare their unwillingness to give up methods and measures which betoken undiluted autocracy, is to take up a contradictory position, bewildering to their supporters and tending to deepen in the minds of their critics their disbelief in Government's good intentions. As the Hon. Mover has said, that great Liberal statesman, Lord Morley, when as Secretary of State he had to uphold the action of Government of India taken under this Regulation about eighteen years ago, felt all the time uncomfortable about it. But what was invisible to his mental eye has now become the avowed aim of British policy, namely, the establishment of representative Government in this country. If Lord Morley who could see nothing but autocracy for this country so far as his vision could go, got shivers when he sanctioned the use of the Regulation, is it not time that with the changed outlook, Government discarded the discredited weapon and relied on more humane and acceptable measures to attain their object?

THE DAROGHAS OF RAJPUTANA[1]

How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will,
Whose armour is his honest thought
And simple truth his utmost skill!

SIR HENRY WOTTON, *Character of a Happy Life.*

THE Daroghās or Chākars form a caste amongst the Hindus of Rajputana. They are to be found in every Rajput State and in every town and important village in Rajputana. Wherever there are Rajputs, Daroghās or Chākars are to be found there. The name by which they first became known was "*Golās.*" "*Golā*" is an abbreviation of the Sanskrit word "*Golak,*" which means "a widow's son by her paramour" (*vide* the Sanskrit Dictionary, *Amar Kosh*). They dislike being called "*Golās,*" as the term is one of contempt and is reminiscent of their low origin and status. They are now called Daroghās, Khawās, Pāswania, Chākar, Chela, Wazir, Dhikdia, Khasāi Chākar, Rawnā ke Sāth Kā, or Rawnas; and their women,—Dāodi, Khalsāi Daodi, Mānas, Vadāran, Goli, Daroghan. They are generally referred to as Golās or Chākar but the class is often called the Darogha class. In Marwar and Mewar (Jodhpur and Udaipur) they are called Rawnās and Khalsāi Chakār. Those of the Daroghās who serve the Princes and members of the Royal family hold their heads high and regard themselves as higher in status than those who serve the poorer Rajputs. They call each other Thakur, and give themselves out as Rajputs and their

[1]Paper written at the request of the Political Secretary, Government of India in 1926 A.D.

caste as Chauhan, Rathor, Sodha, Sankla, Panwar, Solanki, Gehlot, Tak, Bhati, Tanwar, Badgujar, Gor, Baghela, etc. Many of them are descended from the illegitimate off-spring of Rajputs by women of the Darogha or other castes. Many Mahajans and Charans with their close association with the Rajputs, and owing to their holding high positions in Indian States also keep Daroghas as their hereditary servants, but the Daroghas of the Rajputs disdain to enter into marriage relations with them. In Mewar, the off-spring of Bhil women by their Rajput masters marry amongst the Daroghas and become Daroghas. There is a saying in Mewar that in the third generation the off-spring of Bhil women become Daroghas and the off-spring of Darogha women by Rajputs become Rajputs. There are several well-known instances at the present time in Rajputana of Daroghas having become Rajputs and been accepted by them as such. Rajputs of pure blood reduced to poverty and finding it impossible to keep up their position as Rajputs, have sometimes joined the Darogha class and became Daroghas.

The Daroghas have, in course of time, become a necessary part of a respectable Rajput house-hold. Their close contact with them has often proved disastrous to the latter. The young scions of Rajput families often go wrong in their society; take to drinking and contract liaisons with young women of the class. These women later becoming their recognized mistresses, are styled Khawasji, Pardayatji, Vadāranji, when they are allowed to wear gold ornaments on their feet. Their brothers and fathers take pride in being called brothers and fathers of Pardayatji. When the Darogha women become wet nurses in Rajput families, they are called Dhawadji and their sons Dhabhais.

As a class, however, the Golas are looked down upon and treated with scant courtesy by the public. The adages सो गोलां ही घर सूनो (A house is empty

though a hundred *golas* live in it) and **गोला किणसू गुणकर श्रोगण गारा श्राप** (Being himself a man devoid of virtue, to whom can he be useful) show in what estimation they are held by people. The Hindi poet, Rajia, has in a well-known couplet, warned the Rajputs against close association with them. He says:—

गोला घणा नजीक रजपूतां श्रादर नहीं ।
उण ठाकर री ठीक रण में पड़सी राजिया ॥

(Rajputs who allow Golās to come too near to them lose all respect Rajia says that they will find this out to their cost when they go to the battle-field).

In support of this, the incident that befell one of the Thakurs of Āuwa (Jodhpur State) is cited. The Thakur was wounded in a battle and fell off his horse. A Gola who was with him in the fight, rode home on his horse and announced the Thakur's death. His wives broke their bangles and assumed the widows' garb. A little while after, the wounded Thakur with the help of his Rajput followers left the field and returned home. Since then no Gola is allowed to ride on horseback in Āuwa (Marwar).

The following couplet says that when Rajputs are neglected and *Golās* are pampered, the result is that the State is ruined.

कांदा खाया कमधजां घी खायो गोलां ।
चुरू चाली ठाकरां बाजंती ढोलां ॥

(The Rajputs were fed on onions; and the Golās on *Ghee*! See the result, Thakurs, Churu (a town in Shekhāwati) is being taken away by beat of drums).

ORIGIN

In ancient times, Hindus of all classes were free men Kautilya, writing in the fourth century B.C., says in his *Artha Sāstra*, the best known work in Sanskrit literature on Political Science, that *no Arya* (*Hindu*) *could be made a slave* (Dāsa). Later, when the caste

system became crystallized into its present form, and various castes formed themselves into separate and mutually exclusive communities, and inter-caste marriages were forbidden; and as women, owing to various causes came more and more to be kept in seclusion, new social needs, particularly among the military classes, arose and these were met by introducing changes in the Hindu social organization. Rajput men often remained away from their homes fighting or serving in distant parts of India, and as their women lived in purdah, the necessity for employing servants who would do any kind of service demanded of them and who indentified their interests with those of their masters, arose. A class of domestics and dependants, hereditary in character was created and fostered. The nucleus of this class was formed by Golaks or Golas. It received as recruits, the illegitimate off-spring of Rajputs by Bhil and other lower class women. They accepted a modified form of slavery in lieu of a permanent provision for the ordinary needs of life. Some of them were, in course of time, given positions of responsibility and then they came to be called Daroghas (heads of establishment) which name was later applied to the whole class of Golas or Chākars, just as the name Pancholi came to be applied to the Kayasthas in Rajputana. (Pancholi is a corruption of Panchkuli.) The Panchkulies were members of a committee whose functions were to control and collect taxes in Indian States. Brahmins, Mahajans, Gujars were often appointed members of these committees but as Kayasthas came to be appointed to these Committees in large numbers, they came to be called Pancholies and Kayasthas in Rajputana are now called Pancholies.

The Daroghas or Golas are *Chakar* as distinguished from *Naukar*. The latter are free to serve or to go away as they please; not so the Chakar. The emergence of the Chakar or Gola Class thus forms a

landmark in the evolution of Hindu Society.

RELATIONS BETWEEN MASTER AND CHAKAR

The position of the Daroghas in their masters' house-holds may be summarized as below :—

(1) The master gives food, clothes and marriage and other necessary expenses to *Golas*. The expenses incurred in performing *Mosar* ceremonies are given to *Gharjāyā* (Golas born in their masters' houses) Chakars.

(2) The master is entitled to take whatever service he likes from a Chākar. The Chākar is not free to leave his master's service.

(3) The Childrenof Daroghās havearight to getfood and clothes, but are liable to be made to serve in any capacity the master likes.

(4) The master has the right to give in the dowry of his daughter, any daughter or daughters of his Daroghās (Golās). These girls then become the property of the person to whom the master's daughter is married. Sometimes whole families are thus given away.

(5) If a master finds that his Chākars have multiplied and are more numerous than he has need of, he may keep as many as he may like and has the right to tell the others to go and seek livelihood elsewhere, but he claims the right to requisition their services on occasions of marriages, etc., and of sending for and giving away their daughters in dowry.

(6) When a Daroghā's daughter is married to a Daroghā, the *Reet* money paid by the bridegroom is taken by the girl's master. In some cases half of it is given to the girl's father.

(7) A Chākar can become completely free of his master only if he pays off all expenses incurred by his master on his account.

The master's plea everywhere is that as he feeds and clothes his Chākar and bears the expenses of his marriage, the Chākar becomes his property: and not the

Chākar only but his children too. It is a one-sided argument. The master does not take into account the unstinted services the Chākar renders, all the time he is fed and clothed. The master often contends that he feeds him, looks after him, as he looks after his own child. But does his own child become his property in the sense in which he claims the Chākar to be?

The institution is a form of slavery. The fact, that some of the Chākars lead pretty comfortable lives and are employed in positions of responsibility and trust, does not alter the essential character of the system. The slaves of the Ghori Sultans rose to the highest position in the State and founded a ruling dynasty known as the Slave Kings of Delhi. What is slavery is thus described by the learned Judges of the N. W. P. High Court (Queen *Versus* Sikandar Bakhat H. C. R., N. W. P. for 1871, P. 146):

(*a*) A person is treated as a slave if another asserts an absolute right to restrain his personal liberty and dispose of his labour against his will, unless that right is confirmed by Law as in the case of a parent or guardian or jailor.

(*b*) Children are purchased from their parents or strangers and are brought up as domestic servants having little or no liberty conceded to them. These children are practically slaves and it cannot be too widely known that their condition is such as will not be tolerated by English Law, and that persons who detain them in their homes are liable to punishment under the penal code.

The above two clauses give a pretty fair description of the status of a Daroghā or Chākar.

During the Mughal times, this institution flourished. With the advent of British Rule in the country, things began to change. The maintenance of the system was

found to be inconsistent with the principles on which the Government of the East India Company was based. It was repugnant to the minds of the people to whom personal liberty was as precious as life itself. The right of personal freedom and, to order one's life as one liked, subject only to the same freedom for others, was recognized and given effect to. The Government of the East India Company therefore refused to recognize the rights, the masters claimed over their Chākars and not only declined to enforce those claims but made the practical assertion of them, penal.

In 1843 an Act (Act V of 1843) for declaring and amending the Law regarding the condition of slavery within the territories of the East India Company was passed declaring that:

(1) No public officer shall in execution of any decree or order of Court, or for the enforcement of any demand for rent or revenue sell or cause to be sold any person or right to the compulsory labour or services of any man on the ground that such person is in a state of slavery.

(2) No rights arising out of an alleged property in the person and services of another as a slave shall be enforced by any Civil or Criminal Court or Magistrate within the territory of the East India Company.

(3) No person who may have acquired by his own industry or by the exercise of any art, calling or profession or by inheritance, assignment, gift or bequest shall be dispossessed of such property or prevented from taking possession thereof on the ground that such person or the person from whom the property may have been derived was a slave.

(4) Any act which would be a penal offence if done to a free man shall be equally an offence

if done to any person on the pretext of his being in a condition of slavery.

In British India, therefore, the right to have the claims of the master over their Chākars or Daroghās enforced came to an end, and the latter became in law, free agents again. But the operation of this law was not extended to the territories which are under the rule of the Indian Princes. There the system has continued to flourish. Education and enlightenment which teach men that they have certain inalienable rights, have not spread to the same extent in Indian States as in British India, and the masters there, have continued to assert rights enumerated above, and have generally succeeded in having them enforced against their Chakars. Speaking generally, resistance to such claims has been offered only by those who have had opportunities of breathing the freer atmosphere of British India.

The continuance of the system of keeping Chakars is inconsistent with the declaration recently made by the British Delegate before the Assembly of the League of Nations that slavery had been abolished in the British Empire. The requirements of the situation would perhaps be met if it be ordered that no Court shall enforce any right claimed by a master over his Chakar which cannot be enforced against an ordinary servant. This would ease the situation and the agitation would subside. The institution came into existence in consequence of the adoption of the purdah system and would automatically disappear with it. But that time is not yet.

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